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THE

Manchester Quarterly

AN ILLUSTRATED JOURNAL

OF

LITERATURE AND ART.



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OCTOBER, 1911.

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Manchester Literary Club.

FOUNDED 1862.

The objects of the MANCHESTER LITERARY CLUB are :—

1. To encourage the pursuit of Literature and Art; to promote research in the several departments of intellectual work; and to further the interests of Authors and Artists in Lancashire.
2. To publish from time to time works illustrating or elucidating the literature, art, and history of the county.
3. To provide a place of meeting where persons interested in the furtherance of these objects can associate together.

The methods by which these objects are sought to be obtained are :—

1. The holding of weekly meetings, from October to April, for social intercourse, and for the hearing and discussion of papers.
2. The publication of such papers, at length or abridged, in a Magazine, entitled the *Manchester Quarterly*, as well as in an annual volume of Transactions; and of other work undertaken at the instance of the Club, including a projected series of volumes dealing with local literature.
3. The formation of a library consisting of (a) works by members, (b) books by local writers or relating to the locality, and (c) general works of reference.
4. The exhibition, as occasion offers, of pictures by artist members of the Club.

Membership of the Club is limited to authors, journalists, men of letters, painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, musical composers, members of the learned professions, and of English and foreign universities, librarians, and generally persons engaged or specially interested in literary or artistic pursuits.

The meetings are held at the Grand Hotel, Aytoun Street, every Monday evening during the Session. Each Session opens and closes with a *Conversazione*. There are also occasional Musical and Dramatic Evenings, and a Christmas Supper. During the vacation excursions are held, of which due notice is given.

W. R. CREDLAND, *Hon. Secretary.*

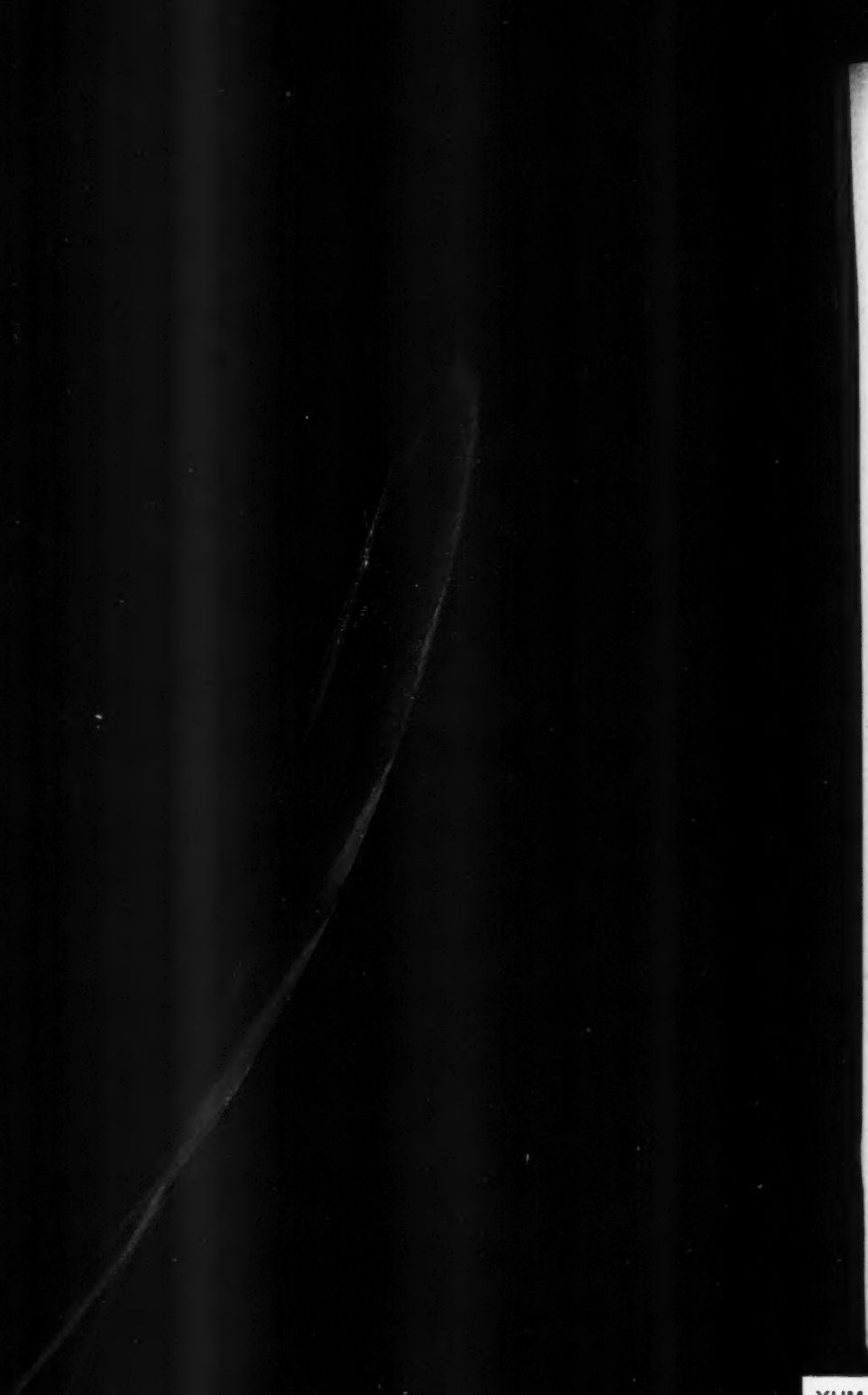
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JOHN HOWARD NODAL.

From a photograph taken by Warwick Brookes in 1874.





LEAVES FROM AN OLD MANCHESTER JOURNAL.

By JOHN MORTIMER.

[T was known as the "Sphinx," this Manchester Journal, whose pages I have found myself turning over in a reminiscential way. Its title suggests antiquity, but the term old as applied to itself is a relative one. It is just forty years since it passed away, and it died comparatively young, for when the end came it was but three years and three months old, and from that must be deducted a month of suspended animation. It was issued weekly at the price of one penny, and regarding its birthday it may be noted that there is a curious error on the title page of the first of the four volumes which may be said to constitute its biography. It is there stated that it dates from the 25th of June, 1868, whereas the first number did not appear until the 25th of July in that year. Before proceeding further let me say that a personal interest in its fortunes has had something to do with the task I have undertaken of reviving some of its features. Its editor was John Howard Nodal, to whom I owe my introduction, in an amateur way, to the world of journalism. But it was not through the "Sphinx" that the introduction came. There was another local journal, of earlier origin, known as the "Free Lance," of which he was the editor, and to him in that capacity, I had submitted a descriptive sketch with a view to its publication. To my surprise and pleasure it was accepted. It was not the first time I had experienced the peculiar joy of seeing myself in print. That had come through the medium of the "Family Herald," to which I had contributed some

scraps of fugitive and juvenile verse, but this was my first venture in prose. It was followed by others with equally successful results, and then came an invitation from the editor to consider myself one of the staff. Not long after, however, and for reasons of which I have no recollection he resigned his editorship of the "Free Lance," and became one of the founders and chief in charge of the "Sphinx," and in this new venture, until the close of it, I found myself congenially engaged. Perhaps I ought to apologise for this personal note, to the introduction of which I have been prompted by a feeling of grateful regard for one from whom I received the kindest encouragement in those callow days.

When it appeared our journal showed prominently on its title-page a pictorial heading, a wood-cut drawn by F. Holding, and engraved by Robert Langton, with the letters of its name standing out in bold relief on the verge of a dusky stretch of desert sand, with pyramids in the rear, and, in the foreground, the massive sun-glinted head of a sphinx, of unmutilated visage, gracefully outlined, and "staring right on with calm, eternal eyes." For the benefit of the uninitiated there was a foot-note on an inner page giving some information regarding the meaning of the word sphinx; how in the Greek it signified the squeezer or strangler, and how the figure, in its Egyptian presentation, might be taken as emblematical of intellect and force. As indicating its scope and purpose the "Sphinx" was described as "A Journal of Criticism and Humour: Art, Literature, Music, the Drama, Society, and Current Events," and, apart from the space used for advertisements, these matters were to be discussed within an area of eight pages in each number.

Our paper was ushered in by a Prologue, in rhyme, which was declared in its nature to be—

A kind of half and half,
And seasonable compound of seriousness and chaff.

Of the opening lines are these:—

Arouse, colossal mystery, impassive, stern and grand.
 Wake! from a world's life sleep; brush off thy centuries of
 sand.
 On thy old crones, the Pyramids, bestow a parting hug.
 (Thour't fond of squeezing) and deport thy weather-beaten
 mug
 Forth from the land where thou hast lain, a thing of myth
 and might,
 Whilst hecatombs of Empires vast have perished out of sight.

 Straightway towards Cottonopolis thy mighty steps incline,
 To keep in countenance some scribes who have elected thine
 The symbol of their enterprise.

 The gracious right acquired,
 By that thou art the emblem of—their aims shall be inspired!

The closing lines are these:—

As a popular instructor, admonitor and guide,
 With our best and worthiest efforts the Sphinx must be
 allied;
 Must give the meed of praise or blame where'er it may be
 due,
 And take of things in general a most impartial view:
 Must, in short, not spare its efforts until the public thinks
 It could part with many comforts but—couldn't spare "The
 Sphinx!"

The "Sphinx" was a product of its time, which gave birth not only to the "Free Lance" and itself, but to a number of similar ventures, all having one purpose in common, that of dealing with local subjects of interest, many of them untouched by the larger journals, daily or weekly, and in a spirit of freer criticism than was usually to be found there. Moreover room was made for the playful indulgence in humour, or, when necessary, the more serious use of satire, and for literary exercises in prose or verse. The prosperity of such a venture depends, to a large extent of course, upon the editor, as the guiding

and controlling influence, and in this respect the "Sphinx" was peculiarly fortunate. Our chief was already a journalist with much experience derived from his connection with the local press. A very brief acquaintance served to reveal the existence in him of many excellent qualities. He impressed you with a sense of high-mindedness, of strength of will, independence of judgment, and a discriminating faculty in criticism. He had the courage of his opinions, and though brought up under the Quaker rule there was in him a distinctly fighting spirit when the occasion came. It is interesting to recall one's earliest impressions of him, as the first editor with whom one had come into personal contact; the tall, dark man, a little round-shouldered, and with just a tendency to stoop, who smoked a cherrywood pipe, and in the plainness of his garb, and the absence of all ornament, was evidently indifferent to outward show; a man with something of a shy furtiveness of manner, and of slow deliberation in his speech, which was as plain and free from adornment as his dress; whose countenance was of a serious cast, and who looked at you with dark glowing eyes that seemed to be always questioning you; a man, however, with a sense of humour lurking behind that gravity, and manifesting itself in occasional explosions of laughter, which, in its heartiness, some were pleased to regard as Homeric. In "The Days of his Vanity," a novel by Mr. Sydney Grundy, whom one remembers as one of the most notable contributors to the "Sphinx," there is a description by the hero, a briefless barrister, of his first acquaintance with a live editor, and in "Mr. Potts," as such, there are those who say they distinguish some of the features which characterised the novelist's former chief. "Potts," says he, "was a pressman all over—none of your amateur dabblers, who combine occasional contributions to the press with more remunerative avocations, but a journalist by birth and breeding, who had been familiar with scrawled copy and wet proofsheets from his childhood.

My description of him may not have been flattering, and his inky aspect may be my imagination; but I have no disposition to speak of him with disrespect. He is a type of a considerable class—a man of no particular education, but with a fund of wide and miscellaneous knowledge, both of men and things, that would shame many a student. The variety and scope of his information was something almost astounding . . . The 'Weekly Newsletter,' of which he was the editor, was not a fashionable, but a thoroughly respectable and genuine newspaper, with a considerable circulation among the middle classes, and by no means a bad paper upon which to serve one's first apprenticeship to journalism. Its editor had graduated on the staff of many a more important journal, and was by no means a bad master under whom to serve." He says, further, that it is upon such papers as these "that young men begin, and upon them that they expend the vigour and the freshness of their youth." The truth of this last statement must be admitted, and of our editor it could be said that he had the power not only to attract young writers, but those of maturer growth, and to keep them. For a lengthened period one had touch with him only through the medium of correspondence, and an admirable painstaking correspondent he was, whose letters freighted, as they often were, with pointed and kindly-expressed criticism and advice, it was always a pleasure to receive and preserve. As, with rare exceptions, the articles were anonymous, and their writers unrevealed to us by him, one's fellow contributors were unknown, but there came a time when our editor thought it desirable to bring his flock together for mutual acquaintance, and in council. These meetings were of a social kind at which matters relating to the paper were discussed, and were held at stated intervals in various old hostleries, for we proved migratory in our habits; the "Bull's Head," behind the Old Market Place, the "Star," in Deansgate, and the "Fountain," in Meal Street, being of those which

remain in the memory. Gathered thus together we were a fairly numerous company, made up not so much of press-men as of representatives of various professions and pursuits, such as law, medicine, art, and commerce, with some unclassed ones among us about whom there was that peculiarly attractive flavour of companionship which belongs to the inhabitants of the beautiful City of Prague. It seemed very worshipful, this society into which one had gained admission, with a charm of freedom about it, which contrasted strongly with the routine and restraint of every-day business life.

But it is time to get beyond the Prologue, and to the gathering of a few scattered leaves from the contents of our Journal. The first of them is headed "The Forest of Rossendale," and it came from the pen of Edwin Waugh, one of the most genial and notable figures in that group of writers which our editor had got around him. It is a review of the history of that district, by Thomas Newbigging, which had just appeared, and the result was a charming essay on the Forest which has since been included in Waugh's works. He has nothing but praise for Mr. Newbigging's book, which he says is written in a lucid style, thoroughly true to nature in its descriptive parts, and evinces a genuine love of the work in hand, and ample knowledge of the details throughout. Both historian and reviewer were in love with the subject. After revelling, in his own inimitable way, in picturesque descriptions of the forest, and its inhabitants under ancient conditions, Waugh says of the new ones: "The natives of Rossendale, like their own hills, are of a rocky make. They are a strong-hearted, hard-headed, slow-and-sure enduring race; and they are generally a good way through in person. These descendants of the sturdy churls of the Forest would bide a good deal of hammering before they could be knocked out of their hereditary shape. They are singularly open-tempered and enterprising; and yet they are a soil-bound generation in some respects. They still

speak of their native district with a kind of affectionate remembrance of what it has been—as ‘Rossenda’ Forest’; and the name smacks of heather-scented breezes and rustling woods . . . And even on Manchester Exchange a ‘Rossenda’ chap’ has something of ‘ken-speckle’ primitiveness about him. He brings a kind of bracing mountain air with him into that swarming temple of commerce, which helps to keep its tricky atmosphere wholesome.” Waugh’s contributions were numerous and following this came a series of sketches, called “Voices in the Street.” For the reception of these voices one has to go back to the old market place on a Saturday morning, and imagine them coming to Waugh, as he sits at an open window in an upper storey opposite that ancient wood-and-plaster building still to be seen there, quaintly gabled, and “bending and bulging, here and there, beneath its load of years.” In the open space beneath him there are “ruddy-faced gardeners and their wives, who have come into town with the fresh produce of the season, the whole expanse is one little garden of plants and flowers; and all the air of this quaint corner of our busy city smells ‘as sweet as Bucklersbury in simple time.’” The first voices that came to him from below are those of a porter and a bricklayer who are discussing the death of “Poor owd Buzzart.”

Says one to the other, “It wur Billy Quifter ‘at tow’d me about it. Billy an’ his feyther wur at th’ bedside when th’ owd felly deed. It seems he’d a terrible hard time on’t afore he could draw away; and he lee moanin’ neet an’ day; an’ th’ last bit o’ breath in his body coom shiverin’ to th’ edge of his lips, now and then, an’ turn’t back again a bit, as if it couldn’t stop in, and dursn’t go eawt—like a chylt freetn’t o’ bein’ put out o’ th’ dur on a stormy day. Eh, it would ha’ melted th’ heart of a stone to ha’ sin th’ owd woman while th’ poor owd lad wur feightin’ between life and death! Hoo turn’t his pillow, an’ hoo wet his lips, an’ hoo wiped his

for-yed, but nought seem't to give him yez (ease). An' as th' tears ran down her face, hoo said, 'Eh, my poor Jim! He'l never have no pleasure *till it's o'er!* God help him!' At last hoo leant down, an' hoo said 'James!' Quitter said that th' owd fellow oppen't his e'en a bit, an' his lips gave a bit of a wacker, and then his e'en went to again. 'James,' hoo said, '*has thae somethin' on thy mind?*' They could see that th' owd fellow knowd what hoo said, for he oppen't his e'en a bit, an' gasped out, 'Nawe, Nawe,' 'Then why doesn't thae dee, my poor lad?' said Betty, 'why doesn't thae dee?' An' sure enough, th' owd craytur geet set free th' same neet. 'Poor owd Buzzart! Aw'll tell thee what Jack death's nobbut a poor thing!' 'Nawe it isn't, owd lad; an' life's noan so mich better; for a body's no sooner here nor they're off again, afore they known wheer they are.'" Among these "voices in the street" one recognizes some that have since reappeared and become familiar, such as "The Nomination," "The Swallowed Sixpence," and "The Wimberry Cake." Under the title "Sea Weeds from the Coast of Antrim," there are Irish travel-sketches, which have also found a permanent place in his collected works. Of a more scrappy nature are some odds and ends of Northern humour, many of which were taken from "Sancho's Wallett." Old members of the Manchester Literary Club will remember a song which was often sung there called "Freedom of Opinion." One verse runs thus:—

And in a coach if a traveller would,
O'er the window hold dominion,
And put it down, I put it up—
I'm for freedom of opinion.

These lines serve to preface a story which tells how "Two Lancashire workmen, sitting opposite each other on a cold day, one of them puts the window down; the other instantly puts it up again. The first then sends his fist through the window pane; and looking earnestly at his

companion, he says, "Nea then; owd lad; thae can have it oather road (either way)!" There is another story which Waugh could tell better when he used the folk-speech throughout, and with a fuller embroidery. It tells how, "A stout old country manufacturer, whose affairs had fallen into the Court of Bankruptcy, was undergoing examination before the Commissioners as to his expenditure. He had been a very self-indulgent man; and as the scrutiny was unusually severe, the perspiration burst from the old man's brow, and he begged that they would 'ax him no more about it; for it wur making him ill.' The scrutineers, however, were merciless, and, in the midst of the old man's distress, a troubled rumble arose in his interior, when, smiting his paunch with his hand, he cried out, 'Thee howd *they* din; I *owe* thee nowt, as heaw!' " In turning over these leaves one is not only turning back to days departed, but to be reminded of lost landmarks, and conditions of things that have passed away. Here, for instance, is a description of Knott Mill Fair, and it is Waugh who gives it. It is an odd conceit, but characteristic, that he should head it with some lines from Autolycus's song, "When daffodils begin to peer."

Knott Mill Fair was not a place where you would seek for daffodils; it has gone for ever, but the scene lives again as he describes that Easter Carnival, and one can see him shouldering his way down Deansgate, filled with a moving mass of pleasure-seeking humanity—with the canvas-roofed stalls, a quarter of a mile long, laden with nuts and gingerbread and toys, lining the footways. It is night, and on he goes, "jolting and elbowing through the thickening crowd, the complicated uproar growing denser at every stride. Lads and lasses are whisking halfpenny brooms in each other's faces," and on all sides the squeak of penny trumpets is heard amid the uproar. When the side street is reached which gives access to the fair-ground, along this he is borne like a cork on water past "St. Matthew's lonely pile," and between the stalls with the glare and stench of

naphtha lamps filling the air, until he is floated into the very heart of the fair. "It is a scene of bewildering din; and glaring, staring, tawdriness . . . Manders is here with his famous menagerie; and a great circus troupe from the amphitheatre. . . . On the platform, in front of the circus, the genial face of Walleth, the Queen's jester, is visible, and, as he paces the platform swathed in a great white overcoat, and quietly smoking a cigar, he is the observed of all observers." There are all sorts of minor shows, but, on this occasion, he misses "the dear old drama of the wooden booth." Finally, he says: "After visiting Mander's Menagerie we saw the Marionettes; we had our fortunes told by a performing dog; we stroked the hairless horse; we patted the fair giantess on the shoulder; we saw the fire-king dance on red-hot iron, and drink flaming spirits with a spoon, and we laughed at everything. After which we worked our passage homeward again, with our pockets full of toys."

For journalistic purposes the Manchester Exchange afforded a happy hunting ground, so under the title "On the Rialto," and in other forms, there were articles in the "Sphinx" in which humour and philosophical reflection were blended with comments on the state of the staple trade, and on those who dealt with it within that arena. The best of these came from the pen of John Stores Smith. He was then engaged in the cotton trade, but he was more than half a literary man. Already he had written a life of Mirabeau, which was attributed to G. H. Lewes; had been engaged in an unlucky venture in connection with "Leigh Hunt's London Journal," which resulted in financial loss to him, and some strongly expressed opinions on his part unfavourable to Leigh Hunt, which had appeared in the "Free Lance," and which Mr. Alexander Ireland thought unjustifiable. Among his friends he counted Cobden and Carlyle, and he was the literary executor of Miss Jewsbury.

It was an older Exchange than the present one that

was being dealt with, that once familiar building upon whose semi-circular end Edwin Waugh could look from his eyrie in the Market Place. Its principal chamber was on a lower level than the present one, and its windows commanded views of the neighbouring streets. Among the men who there did congregate there was ample material for our writer's piquant pen; he describes their appearance, manners, and morals, and contrasts them with conditions existing five and twenty years before. They are deteriorating, it seems, outwardly and inwardly, these modern men of business. Once they were clean shaven, now they are becoming hirsute. Their customary suits of solemn black are giving place to colours. Time had been "when a man holding a situation might as well have robbed a till as have been seen in light breeches; now you may wear what you will, in the widest sense, and take no ill of it." Morals too have changed with clothing. In earlier days, "there was no such thing as a written contract; an enormous and unspeculative business was done by word of mouth; there was no cancelling, and the Statute of Frauds was unknown. There were sweeps no doubt as now, but they either soon broke up or did their spiriting more gently, and they assumed a virtue if they had it not. Nowadays all is changed. Men who ought to thank heaven if they had no character, so bad is the one they possess, are quite on a level with the best, and are treated with frank familiarity by men of unblemished reputation." In a delightfully humorous vein does the philosopher discourse on the possible connection between clothes and morals, as thus: "Whether it be that the utmost latitude in principles having got to be tolerated, it was felt that costume was a matter of indifference, and might just as well be motley, or whether there is some subtle connection between clothes and character; whether when coat-tails are cut away honesty goes with them, and in proportion as its seat is exposed honour diminishes, and if wearing hair about his face makes a man downier; these

are questions we cannot settle ourselves. We have thrown out the hint, and leave its following out to more philosophic minds." Among the frequenters of the Exchange are some lookers-out who are described as "nose-flatteners." "Go round the building outside for a walk daily," says he, "and you will note the curious fact that at the same hours, the same noses are against the same panes." The windows giving upon Exchange Street are among the favourite outlooks. "These windows," he says, "are our School for Scandal. No one passes but some one knows all about him or her." The nose-flatteners tell stories of them true or false. In some cases they strip their victims of the last rags of gentility, or pluck the fine feathers from fine birds. "That equipage whose whole style would have you believe that its owner only condescended to Manchester and to commerce from a whim, we are told is occupied by a lady whose mother was a dealer in tripe, and whose husband never remembered a father. See that carriage at Colnaghi's door. It belongs to a man who took them down the area of his walls, and told them to cover them with paintings. When it was done, young Colnaghi went up to view it, and said 'you are nearly all right, you have Cox, and Copley Fielding, and Creswick, and Hunt. If you had a Cattermole you would be complete.' Upon which the gentleman said he would consider it, and next day penned the following epistle: "My wife and me thinks we should not miss being compleat just for a caterpillar more or less; so please send one.'"

The state of the cotton trade, its crises and proposed remedies are dealt with seriously enough when the occasion calls for it, and it is curious to note how in these things history repeats itself. You have the same complaints as now, that cotton is too dear, that manufacturers are working at a loss and nothing but short time will save the situation. Humour, however, will creep in, and it has the effect of relieving the gloom. This is derived from representatives of the industry, whose speech

displays "all the variations of our native Doric. The energetic Mr. Mumps of Oldham will tell you, with a copious sprinkling of expletives, that 'This here's the state of the case. This here cotton's too dear by one-half. The whole difficulty lies in this here. Mak brass by spinning with cotton at elevenpence! Can we the d——l as like!'" But as to short time, and the practice of it, there is a disposition on the part of these workers to prefer one another. "Snigbruck cannot understand the infatuation of Burnley; and Mr. Mumps running his full 56 hours per week, denounces every spinner in Oldham who is not standing, as a past-participle idiot." Not only are these country manufacturers known by their speech, but in an olfactory way. On a wet day, when the rain is on their clothes, there arises from them an aroma of damp humanity of a mixed kind, which can be differentiated by a keen-nosed connoisseur; so that from the gallery, to which the exhalation ascends, it is possible to say, "That arises from a soaked Oldhamer. That from a drenched Darwiner. That more delicate West of England waft is from a slightly-sprinkled shipper. Whilst that one, more furious than any, and almost visible in steam, proceeds from the representatives of Snigbruck, in whom is waging a conflict between inner and outer moisture, and in whose classic garments the evening's entertainment is meeting the morning's rain." Snigbruck was understood to be Blackburn, and one of the most entertaining articles professes to be a report of a meeting in that town to discuss the state of trade. It was called by the Mayor, and held at the Blue Cow. When all those present had been provided with their chosen drinks, the Mayor arose and spoke.

"Looking round," he said, "on this here influential borough of Snigbruck, a man must be a hass as cannot see it owes its importance to the cotton trade. Th' cotton trade is its heart, lungs, and liver all in one; it is for sure. And this 'ere important trade is in an 'ole. Mr. Councillor Atefore says 'hup a tree!' Be it so: hup a tree or in an

'ole is the same thing. But what I ask is this. Is this community to stand still—is the Mayor of this community to keep quiet, and not to see if nothing can be done to get the trade out of this 'ole, or down from hup that tree? Oi thought not, and so I called this meeting." One cannot describe here the discussion which followed, but, after much meandering, the talk resolved itself in a resolution to the effect that short time was recommended by the meeting to all districts engaged in the spinning and weaving industries; but, at the same time, it individually left itself open to work to the utmost limit allowed by law.

In the department of criticism music, of course, had its own important place, and behind the pen which produced much of this one recognized that unique personality, Henry Franks. A favourite subject with him, and upon which he could discourse with considerable subtlety, was "Geist," a word of German origin which might be taken to represent "the flower of the mind," or, in a more refined definition, as "an intellectual perfume without which even the flower is coarse." In the "Sphinx" he devoted an article in exposition of the existence of this exquisite quality in music. Other articles were promised on the same subject in its relation to painting and literature. These did not appear, but some years afterwards he read a remarkable paper to the Manchester Literary Club on Geist as manifested in the various arts, a contribution which may be found in one of the early volumes of the Club's "Transactions." It was to Hallé's concerts that he mainly devoted himself, in criticism of a free and easy kind, with a fine audacity about it, and with unexpected surprises of illustration. It is not possible here to give more than a few examples of his style. Regarding the Hallé orchestra he thinks there is a preponderance of wind instruments which sometimes, in their use, conceal or obscure the main thought of the composer, which "should float lightly and continuously on the surface of the music. But the wind instruments sometimes raise a

storm in which we lose sight of the little white sails. The fault lies more particularly with the brass instruments. The gentlemen who are entrusted with them should remember that the walls of Jericho were once shaken by a few trumpets." Of a performance of Costa's "Eli," he says that the singing of the recitative was atrocious. "Mr. Sims Reeves is the only artist who, in a recitative, knows how to express the sense of the words through the music. As a rule singers chant the recitative with a kind of maudling, lazy piety, as if there were a coolness between them and the Almighty." On the whole the performance was not inspiring. "About the middle of the second part of the oratorio several people fell asleep in their stalls, only being disturbed now and then by the sudden jerks of the violins. Towards the end, when the organ played, these people mechanically clutched their hats and mantles and walked out very quietly. Connecting the fact of the organ with their previous slumbers we should not be at all surprised if many of them were under the impression that they had been in church and were leaving just before the collection." There is a disposition in these days to depreciate Mendelssohn, but our critic is bold enough to say that he prefers his imperfections to the frigid faultlessness of many other composers. It is the "Reformation Symphony" with which he is dealing, and the style is characteristic. "The symphony," says he, "is full of beautiful instrumental effects. The trombones break in with wonderful force, after the somewhat mystic opening, like Luther throwing a defiant flash of intellectual light into the superstitions of the Middle Ages; a light which at the same time dispels the darkness and gives promise of a future glory. In the *scherzo* a lovely landscape is opened out before us as soon as the clouds have opened to let the sun in. And in the *allegro* we feel ourselves torn along by the violins in the rapturous haste of victory." That last sentence delighted the editor, who declared it worthy of De Quincey. He rolled

it as a sweet morsel under his tongue, and I can hear him repeating it, as, along with the author, we walked together down Oxford Street. Our critic had a profound admiration for Charles Hallé, who, as a conductor, could give "the reins to the performers without letting them forget that the ends were held by a firm hand." Of one of his performances on the piano, when the music is light and beautiful, he says, "Mr. Hallé seemed to splash humour from his finger tips, and the orchestra caught fire and accompanied him worthily." Of a new composer he says,

"It is as impossible to predict the career of a young man as it is to predict the course a kite will take if you give it string. Sometimes it rises straightly and rapidly, sometimes it rises waveringly, yet surely, sometimes it flounders a little above ground, and then pitches headwards down again, sometimes it dodges betwixt heaven and earth, entangled in a chimney pot; this is the most mischievous kind of kite. There is nothing so difficult as dislodging mediocrity from the house top, which common people mistake for a pedestal. For instance you can no more convince a British school girl that Mr. Tupper is only a kite clinging fast to his bit of chimney pot, and not a poet reposing in the skies, than you can convince her that every respectably dressed young man is not an Heir of Redcliffe."

Our critic had fine resources of language to draw upon, and a fertile imagination, as this description of Haydn's idea of chaos in the "Creation" serves to show. "Haydn," he says "resorts to no extravagant means, and yet he keeps the mind in awful suspense, and surprises it with glorious relief. Now and then from out the deadly darkness, a voice rises and flutters, and sinks back again, like an imprisoned spirit; and then that mighty outburst of splendour, 'and there was Light,' reveals, like the opening of a curtain, the lovely new world, and we almost feel ourselves then first called into existence. With all the spiritual freshness and exuber-

ance of Spring does Haydn sing of the new-created world. In worship and in wonderment we fold our hands closer and closer, as we rise with him through each successive musical revelation, and join the celestial choir. This is the triumph of art, not to Be ecstatic, but to be the imperceptible means of inspiring ecstasy." As a piece of fine writing, of the impressionist kind, one is inclined to think that this will sample with the best that is being given to us by the musical critics in these days.

Frequenterers of the Hallé Concerts of that time may remember that in the intervals of the performance it was the custom of some members of the audience to betake themselves to a house of refreshment in Windmill Street, near by. It stood on ground now used as an approach to the Central Station. A beer-house you might call it, which was familiarly known as "Jim Lea's." It was thought worthy of a special article in the "*Sphinx*," and the proprietor is referred to as "The Right Honourable James Lea." "The appearance of the house," says the writer, "is not prepossessing. Indeed, it is very much the reverse. It is a very small, low, white house, so far resembling a cellar that you descend two or three steps to enter it." To this one would add the impression that it showed a red lamp over the doorway. "Without introduction or previous information of a reliable character, a visitor would hesitate as to the desirability of trusting himself there. Such hesitation would vanish after the first visit, without any chance of being at any time renewed," the fact being that the host and hostess were most respectable people, and their liquid refreshments of the best. Like Mr. Thomas Tyson, of chop-house fame, and his contemporary, the Right Honourable James Lea was a character. Of his outward form the writer says: "Imagine a florid, sandy Falstaff after three weeks of reduced rations, with a voice a trifle asthmatic, and you have a rough idea of Mr. Lea." He has the appearance of being bald, but he is not so. For some reason the Right

Honourable gentleman sees fit to have his head shaved to keep his hair about one sixteenth of an inch long, and by some occult powers it is always kept the same length. His customers are interested in watching its growth, and this has been the excuse for many an extra beer. Ordinarily he wears a grey suit of which the coat is buttonless. "But," says the writer, "Mr. Lea has a delicate appreciation of the proprieties. . . . On Thursday evening, out of respect to Mr. Hallé and the full-dress visitors who on that night inundate his cellar, Rumour whispers that alterations of a very remarkable character render his costume harmonious with others." Those who have found themselves among that dress-coated throng on Hallé nights will have a kindly recollection of that dim interior, with its tiny snugger, the shining rows of glasses on the shelves, and of the host and hostess, and may be induced to reflect on the changed condition of things, in view of that palatial structure, the Midland Hotel, to which the gentlemen from Hallé's may now betake themselves. An article headed "Market Row," reminds one of the old Concert Hall, which once occupied a portion of the site of that great hotel. Those who remember that temple of music in its palmy and exclusive days, when admission to its sacred precincts was rendered impossible for male non-subscribers residing within a stated number of miles, ten or more, from the city, will understand what is meant by "Market Row." The audience was as fashionable and select as Manchester could produce, and it was the custom in the interval of a performance for members of it to betake themselves to the vestibule, or outer chamber, where the young ladies might be seen seated there to receive the attentions of their gentlemen admirers. It was to this custom that the objectionable phrase was attached. The article is avowedly written after the manner of the *Daily Telegraph* of that time, and the occurrence of the word Geist in it gives some clue to the author. He assumes a very high moral tone, and begins with this solemn

announcement: "We were present at the last Concert Hall concert, and we saw Market Row." But before he reaches that place, in his article, you find that he has occupied more than half his space with a dissertation on headaches and their causes, to which he has been led by the remark of a witty Frenchman to the effect that "a headache is a hatband worn in memory of departed pleasures." His reflections are a little mixed, and are brought to a conclusion in a sentence containing more than one hundred and fifty words, devoted to the consideration of whether the girl of your choice should be a hot-house flower or one of the garden. When he finds himself in Market Row he has nothing better to say of the fair occupants of the seats than this:—

"In that sad kind of jest which is so often sadder reality, it is called Market Row, and the wares are exhibited with all the vulgar display of hungry competition, so that at the first glance, and only at the first glance, you see the best of them. . . . With the cruel patience which is woman's lot, they sit through the fifteen minutes parade, their drapery wrapped about them with studied negligence, or their most sacred charms exposed with all the confidence of the veritable Free Traders they are, while the men walk confusedly past, staring, bowing, and exchanging suffocating little sayings, expressing in their faces almost every sentiment but that of respect."

Not as bad as that one feels sure, though a good imitation of the style of the *Daily Telegraph* in the days when the young lions thereof were roaring for their prey.

In turning from the Hall of Concerts to the Town Hall, and an account of a meeting held there in furtherance of the claims of women to the suffrage, one seems to detect the presence of the same mocking spirit as that displayed towards the occupants of "Market Row." The writer evidently attended the meeting for the purpose of poking fun at its promoters, and defends himself in this way. "If we are told," says he, "that it is easier to

ridicule the object of the meeting than to reason about it, we reply that we consider public meetings and elections to be so removed from woman's proper place in the world, that to speak seriously about that object is to give its advocates an advantage which they have not earned. It would be tacitly admitting that they are endowed with reason." The meeting, however, as he described it is interesting for us by reason of the references to some of the persons who were present. The chair was taken by Mrs. Max Kyllmann, but the principal lady figure was Miss Lydia Becker. Of her, when she rose to read her report, he says:—

"Miss Becker was dressed in her best clothes. It is well known that when the Hindoo widow goes, according to custom, to be burned, she decks herself in her gaudiest paints and feathers, having worked herself into a state of rapturous exaltation at the idea of rejoining her husband. By the same sublime effort we can fancy Miss Lydia Becker in front of her chaste looking-glass, putting on her lavender gloves, and her white mantle on the wintry day of the meeting, as if it were only a pic-nic or a christening. We have never seen Miss Becker before and we confess that we felt a kind of remorse at all the jokes about her we have countenanced. We could not help admiring her a little. There was a brave, good-humoured, clever look about her, and, notwithstanding her years, she seemed to feel a fresh and almost childish enjoyment whenever any of the speakers said anything particularly sweet about women's suffrage."

There were some male supporters present, whom one remembers as champions of the cause in those days, and we are told that "Mr. Jacob Bright made a speech, in which for commonplaceness he almost excelled himself. But that would be impossible . . . Mr. Bright was followed by a clergyman, whom we should think is a sensible man on every other subject. And then an agitated being, with a daft look—Dr. Pankhurst—rose and rushed forward to the

table. He appeared to be very young, indeed his voice had not broken, and therefore every allowance must be made for him. He screeched, and threatened with his tiny fist, and pointed in a very rude manner with his little forefinger. He should be told of this. We did not follow his meaning, but we are sure that if you were to put the words 'constitootion,' 'privilege,' 'emancipation,' 'sentiment,' 'justice,' into a hat, in proportion of nine to every other word, and shake them out again, you would have his speech, in as intelligible a form, without the screech and the unpleasant gesticulations, as if he were being strangled. Every time he paused the applause grew fainter. We thought at last that even the brave Miss Becker winced, and secretly made up her mind that she would never invite the agitated being again."

Miss Becker and her doings were often referred to in the "Sphinx," and, at a much later date, when Bishop Lee had departed this life and Bishop Fraser reigned in his stead, one comes upon an "Idyll, after the manner of Tennyson," describing a passage-at-arms between the lady and the prelate. It was from the pen of that wit of the time, John Fox Turner, and is in his happiest vein. It is too long to find full place here but some selected parts may be given. It tells how:—

They met at Christmas, at the Ragged Feast
By good Will Mather out in Salford spread;
Not feast of wine and cakes, but speech and thought,
And pleasant interchange of compliments.

It was a brilliant throng, with many notable ones there,
and

Also James,
And she, the love-lorn dame called Lydia;
These two, the first in place, though last to name,
Sat on the dais, and the earth was glad.
Love rules the Court, the Camp, the Grove, the Church,
The church, the chiefest—for the church is love,
And he, a trusted son of mother Church,

Expounded maxims, and dealt out the law,
 As what were women's duties and the like,
 Why they were strong in much, not strong in all;
 Strong in the witching sphere of hearth and home,
 And gentle ways of mother, sister, wife—
 Not strong in straddling over awkward stiles
 Which baulk the paths of public life of man,
 And tear the raiment as the sheep is torn
 Who, in the thorny hedgerow leaves his wool.
 Thus spoke our James, in pleasant hearty voice,
 With kind considerate speech and honest mind,
 Fresh in his looks, as if from daisy fields
 Down by the breezy Berkshire White Horse Hills,

Him Lydia spotted as he rose and talk'd,
 Lydia the loftiest at our Board of Schools,
 Freest of women in a world of serfs,
 She flashing forth with spectacles on nose,
 Like Arthur's brand, Excalibur, her light
 Full on the prelate blaz'd a wintry fire,
 And clutched her distaff, and her bodkin drew
 Red with the ancient gore of many foes.

Grim was the silence in Will Mather's Hall,
 As, lance in rest the vengeful Lydia bore
 Bang on the rosy prelate in his chair.
 "The purpose of my life," the maid began,
 "Is to make war on devils. (Hear and cheers.)
 Shorn as with garden shears their forked tails
 Lie quivering blown by screaming gales about,
 This was the mission that my fathers bade
 Me work unending all my earnest life;
 No samples early woven, no wax flowers,
 No slothful slippers for the feet of men,
 No apple piety of household drudge
 Pluck'd the high purpose from my sounding breast,
 With beasts at Ephesus I cannot war,
 But I must fight with hosts of beasts at home."

Pale grew the faces at Will Mather's feast,
 A high-wrought funkiness o'erspread the scene;
 The lights burnt blue—so blue so true the maid
 Who played the game of snap-dragon alone.

Still all the time the noise of battle roar'd
There was no apprehensiveness in James,
He, tranquil bachelor, beheld the strife;
She, Maid of Orleans, cleft the foeman's helm,
And dash'd along with deeds of derring-do,
Then sank subdued, and all the world was still.

The contributions of Fox Turner were numerous, and to him were attributed some "Studies in Natural History," of the human species, thirty, or more, of them, of a highly diverting kind, in selection and treatment. In the study of "The Undertaker," he says:—

"This is a subject that ought to have been treated 300 years ago by Montaigne, and to have been allowed to mellow in the volume of the essays which bears his name I used to travel occasionally with an Undertaker in coming to town by rail in a morning . . . Out of respect to past and future corpses he always wore a white choker, as expressive of a general sympathy with bereaved relatives of the world at large. His features were rubicund, but whether from bodies or spirits I never could make out, though I leaned a little towards the latter, and had I been called upon to give it a name, I should have murmured, as if down a speaking tube—rum, not navy—Jamaica—the best. He was a mild man in speech, and advanced what views he had in a very retail draper style, as if treating of black silk across a counter. After I got to know him, his personal attentions and little politenesses to me caused some embarrassment. I thought I observed him one morning taking my measure, and I am not sure that his mind's eye was not indulging a little in that direction, but I refrained from taxing him with it, or from offering him any personal violence in consequence. Still I confess I did not like him saying to me on one occasion that I appeared to have a very bad cough. He placed his hand in his waistcoat pocket, simultaneously, as I fancied to feel for his professional card, but it was only to offer me a lozenge, which I refused rather discourteously I am afraid."

Fox Turner was known to us not only as a humorous writer, and, in post-prandial speeches, as the Yorick of many dinner tables, but as a notable member of the Brazenose Club, a description of which finds place in a series of articles on the Clubs of the city. The "Brazenose" was then housed in its original home, in the street whose name it adopted. The accommodation was not extensive, but it was said of it that there were only two things you could not do there, go to bed or play billiards. It was instituted to promote the association of gentlemen of artistic professions, pursuits, or tastes. It prided itself on bringing men of talent together, and of the results the writer, Fox Turner, or another, thus discourses to a friend who is visiting it:—

"You may find ability enough here to achieve anything. The men who come here are possible members of an administration, or a fragment of future parliaments, or a school of painting, or By'r Lady, they could build churches, or give you a new translation of Horace, or be as daintily and incisively epigrammatic as Martial. They could write you a pantomime, or mount one, or play one. They could cast you a drama with some of the best names on the English stage. They could give you an essay on Roast Pig scarcely inferior to that of dear old Charles. A "Saturday Review" could be edited here, savagely-splendid as the original Reviler. If another treaty of commerce should be wanted, the man will be here when the hour is. Our Rembrandt will paint you the portrait of an Emperor, or a pencil as tireless and more imaginative than Gustave Doré's will furnish you with a study of Giant Despair for a new edition of Bunyan."

Of equally great prowess and possibilities, in their respective spheres, are the legal, medical, and journalistic members, and among the latter was our editor who, in these "Sphinx" days became also a member of the Literary Club, but the only reference in the paper

which can apply to that community occurs in a description, among other inns, of the "Crozier," which may be taken to be the "Mitre," where the Club was then lodged. Among the features of that hostelry we get this one, "Literature is represented by an amphibious kind of club which holds its meetings there periodically, and the members of which if they do not, like the Edinburgh reviewer, cultivate literature upon a little oatmeal, may be said at least to cultivate social joys and pleasures on a modicum of letters." It was reserved for our editor, when he became president of the club, to amend that order of things, and to blend with those social pleasures a prevailing high seriousness of literary purpose.

Though a wag, in giving an account of "A 'Sphinx' party," thought proper to include the Town Clerk among those present, he had no place there nor on the staff. But, in one form or another, he often figured in the pages of the paper in prose or rhyme. Sir Joseph Heron, admittedly the first town-clerk in the country, was a very important personage in the city, indeed practically its governor; for while the mayor ruled the Corporation, the Town Clerk ruled the Mayor. These relationships were set forth in a song from the pen of one of the staff. It was called "Sir Joseph," and one has heard it sung at our meetings to the air of "Simon the Cellarer":—

To Sir Joseph, the Town Clerk, come many a score
Of Councillors bold and free
But the boldest of all of them loses his roar
When he's put on his first Com-mit-tee,
When he's one of a large Com-mit-tee,
Of business or routine he never doth fail,
And though Alderman flatter and Councillors rail,
Yet he only smileth, and quaintly will say
"I will find them employment, while they find the pay;"
And ho, ho, ho, he doth quietly show
Each new coming member the way he should go.

The Mayor, too, he sits in his own private room,
And thinks he's the ruler of all;
And if any one doubts it gets into a fume,
And talketh both loudly and tall—
Both loudly he talketh and tall;
But there's a small parlour close by the back stair,
Where the Town Clerk has often a chat with the Mayor,
Who finds it much simpler to do as he's told,
Than refuse and be quickly left out in the cold;
For ho, ho, ho, Sir Joseph doth know,
Who pulleth the strings of this civic peep-show.

Sir Joseph he sits in his soft-cushioned chair,
Disdainful of clamour and strife,
For while every November must see a new Mayor
It is plain he's elected for life—
He feels sure he's elected for life:
For Sir Joseph is skilled in the use of his tongue,
And although he's been handsome, is no longer young;
So each new suggestion he knocks on the head,
And the Council they raise him his wages instead,
While ho, ho, ho, he will chuckle and crow;
What! any be master, but Joseph? No. No!"

In the form of rhymes, songs, and epigrams, a good deal of verse appeared in our pages, some of it, on the humorous side, from the pen of that choicest of Bohemians, Robert Pollitt, known to us then as our rhyming chronicler. "Sir Joseph" is a song quite in his vein, though I am not aware that he wrote it. In like manner, as to changed scenes and conditions, are some articles relating to Owens College, then located in Quay Street, contributions notable as coming among others, from a distinguished student of that hall of learning, James Parkinson, who now sits in the editorial chair of the *Manchester Evening News*. Less known to one at the time, but understood to be among the contributors, was Randolph Caldecott, whose pen and pencil seem to me possibly traceable in a Christmas number, containing "Sprays from an old Holly Bush," with something of a Washington

Irving flavour about it, and two pages of humorous sketches, eighteen of them, illustrative of "The Mistletoe Beau," and "Mrs. Bobkin's Christmas Party." One remarkable feature of the "Sphinx" was the appearance in it of the valuable biographies of "Lancashire Worthies," written by Francis Espinasse, since published in two volumes, and which have come to be regarded as standard books of reference.

The articles supplied to the "Sphinx" were, for the most part, essentially local in their nature and origin, but, in one notable instance, the editor went outside his ordinary staff and enlisted the services of a London writer, James Hain Friswell, the author of "The Gentle Life," and from him came criticisms of "Living Men of Letters," a long series, inclusive of Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, Dickens, Disraeli, Emerson, Carlyle, Lytton, Lever, Trollope, Ruskin, Ainsworth and Sala. The literary judgments passed upon some of these writers were not lacking in outspokenness, and make interesting reading. "Disraeli," he tells us, "ranks but as a mediocrity: we admire his pluck but cannot read his novels." Dickens "is not of the very highest type of tale-writer, and he has written so much that almost all of it must die." Tennyson is not a great poet, far from it, "and posterity will count it folly to place a half-hearted and polished rhymester amongst her strong great ones, who were fellows with poverty and disrespect in this life, and who learnt in suffering that they might teach in song." And as for Swinburne, "Poor boy, what a career he has missed! . . . His chief and most high works are but mocking songs of the Atheist that erst might have been sung in Sodom, and lascivious hymns to Adonis that might fitly have been howled in Gomorrah." Of Harrison Ainsworth he says, "Let us start with an opinion fearlessly expressed, as it is earnestly felt, that the existence of this writer is an event to be deplored," and George Augustus Sala comes in for gentle words like these: "To some his tipsy writing

is odious; to few even his very best work can be of use. His face, as one can see in a coloured photograph, is an index to his style. He mixes up the characters of the Copper Captain, Bobadil, and Bardolph, and as he ripens he grows more truculent and self-assertive. His career is a *coup manqué*, and if he leave a name to survive till his youngest Bohemian admirer be an old man—for it will survive no longer—it will yet carry with it no affectionate reverence, and will not be conducive to any good whatever." But personalities like these have their perils, as the writer discovered later. It came to be whispered that George Augustus Sala regarded the article as containing libellous matter, and was contemplating legal proceedings, and the shadow of this possibility hung for a while over the "*Sphinx*." But Sala took no steps until Friswell had dished up his articles again, and presented them in book form, under the title, "*Modern Men of Letters, honestly Criticised*"; then did the aggrieved one come down upon the publishers, and, succeeding in his action for libel, got damages to the extent of five hundred pounds.

The last number of the "*Sphinx*" appeared on October 28, 1871, and in the course of a valedictory note the editor says:—

"The *Sphinx* has been an attempt to provide for Manchester a literary and critical journal of a high class. How far it has proved successful in this sense we prefer to leave to the judgment of others. To prevent possible misrepresentations and misconceptions, we think it desirable to state that all rights and interests in the journal and its title have been vested in the proprietors of the *Manchester City News* to whose columns most of the writers of the *Sphinx* will from time to time contribute. It only remains for the editor to record his grateful sense of the able and devoted services rendered by the gentlemen who have so long been associated with him—some of them for a period of nearly five years—and in

their name and his own to bid the readers of the *Sphinx*—farewell.”

It was a welcome change for our editor, for the conducting of the “*Sphinx*” had not been free from worries and anxieties for him, and the element of permanence a doubtful quantity. Henceforward, as one who had attained a more secure means of fulfilling his high journalistic aims, he took the editorial charge of the *City News*, and to what fine issues we are all well aware. He strove hard to promote the social and intellectual well being of the city, earned for himself worthily the reputation of being a great editor, and when the end came passed out of life full of years and full of honours.

SELECTIONS FROM A BOOK OF TABLE TALK.

By GEORGE MILNER.

The Cornet Player.

For an entirely lonely and detached piece of existence commend me to a man playing upon the cornet in a side street on a cold and windy winter's day, with two or three children looking up at him with a fixed and wondering gaze. They are not with him, they only seem to stare at him, as something meteoric, out of his place, dropped from somewhere. Such a man is always utterly hopeless; he never looks at you, or asks for anything; but plays his tune, as if he were under *uncanny* compulsion and then, unfollowed by the children, moves rapidly away to repeat the strange performance at some sufficient distance.

Daniel Deronda.

I have been reading *Deronda*. There is the old bitter or sub-acid flavour which repels even while we enjoy. Yet it is wonderfully clever, and at the same time truer and more wise than most biographies. Truer because in a novel there is not the same temptation to untruthfulness as in a biography, wise because few writers so wise as George Eliot will give their time to ordinary biographical work.

Bathos.

What a fine and complete instance of bathos is the donkey's bray! It begins with a note which is as loud, clear, and defiant as a trumpet-call; a troop might clash into battle under its inspiration; but then immediately comes the laughable and yet hideous diminuendo, the

falling away, the vanishing, the utter break-down, the stammering and quavering *hee-haw*, which seems to smother itself in its own ridicule, and which gives one a sense of nausea, through the auricular nerve, in a way that no other sound seems to do.

Unconsciousness.

The grace of unconsciousness is a marvellous gift. Here is a man who says the most astoundingly daring things without the faintest tremor; the silliest things without the embarrassment of folly; the vainest things with no apparent sense of vanity; and the most entirely wise or witty things without seeming in the least to plume himself upon his possessions.

An Evening Sky.

There is a peculiar evening sky which most of us must have observed:—the sun has gone and there is no colour left in the west, save only a pale, clear blue—clear with a great depth of clearness, and yet with no hint of brilliancy: we wonder, in fact, how, under such conditions, the sky can be so clear without being bright. And do we not see something like this in certain men's minds? no prejudices, no disturbing vices, and no joy—only a clear and settled calm.

Light.

There is a curious pathos to some minds in the extinguishing of a light, however small or trivial. With what intense interest for instance we can bring ourselves to watch the fortunes of some tiny spark, some mere wandering speck of fire, as it goes in and out, in and out, till at length it makes its last little flicker, and then is lost for ever—as much as if it had never been—in the darkness upon which we gaze in vain, again and again looking for the resuscitation which will never come. I suppose it is because we feel the thing to be so very like the great, common tragedy of Death.

Sweet Reasonableness.

What is that faculty which Arnold calls "sweet reasonableness"? I take it to imply the absence of that intellectual impatience which accompanies the want of imagination, and is the correlative of moral selfishness; that inability to comprehend another man's point of view, to appreciate another man's work, to enter into another man's thoughts. It involves also the power to weigh and balance one's own faculties, vices, virtues. It enables a man to do *something*, because it shews him what he can and cannot do; and saves him from blinding prejudices and damaging exhibitions of vanity.

The Functions of Art.

The office of all Art is first to *please*; second to *teach*.

The second may be dispensed with, the first cannot.

To please, in the highest and proper meaning of the word in this connection, is to satisfy that sense of and desire for harmony, which is the artistic faculty either receptive or creative.

Those who desire to please only, have an easier task than the others; but their work is not to be contemned therefore. It is self-sufficient, and, as we have said, first in importance.

The artist who would also teach has before him immensely greater difficulties; his education must be more complete, and he has more need of the restraints which come of severe training.

Many who succeed in the first province, and become satisfactory, if not perfect, would break down utterly in the second. In a word there are two things to be done. If it be not so the result is the painful and too common abortion which can neither teach nor please.

Ruskin.

Ruskin's great power in two directions is indubitable. He has the power to *see* and the power of *style*. No Englishman except perhaps Darwin has been able to

observe so accurately, so thoroughly and so widely over the field of external nature. His power of style too is unique. He knows the values of words and the subtle effect which their right arrangement has upon the mind. Notwithstanding, however, the grandeur of his descriptions I should not admit that he is an *imaginative* writer. In this and in the almost total absence of *humour* lies his weakness. His dogmatism and egotism are felt painfully by the reader as they would not have been if he had written with imagination. Wordsworth has the same objectionable qualities, and if he for instance had written didactically and not imaginatively on art or polemics or politics *his* dogmatism and egotism would have been unendurable.

Genius and Talent.

The man possessing what we call *genius* is he who produces works of surpassing excellence in any kind, not primarily because of study or training but (primarily) in consequence of his being naturally endowed with an organism which puts him into acute sympathy with men or with nature. The man of *talent* is he who produces works of a lesser excellence, sometimes hardly to be distinguished from the other, primarily by virtue of severe training and application.

Industry is of course essential to both, but with regard to genius it is not as Carlyle would have us believe of the essence of the thing. Genius is not simply the "power of taking pains." The man of genius may be capable of sustained effort or he may not. Unquestionably the highest results will be obtained by genius plus industry.

Carlyle.

Carlyle was a Puritan who had lost his creed; a poet who ridiculed verse; an historian who could not write in ordinary prose; a radical who admired despots; and a tory to whom kings, as kings, were entirely hateful.

Urbanity and Roughness.

The softest-spoken men are not always the most dangerous, but the most dangerous men are always the softest-spoken. The civil combatant is in the end found to be the toughest and most grim. The dog which holds does not bark. In many men rudeness is only a sign of conscious weakness, but they wish to impress others with the idea of strength they do not feel. They dare not trust themselves to be urbane.

The Infinite Mind.

If we grant the existence of an infinite and creative Mind capable of grasping the idea or fact of endless Time and Space, and of influencing and directing their procession—then should we not find in this a proof that such a Power would be able to apprehend and include within its active cognition each separate, human, personality, infinitesimal as, by comparison, these are.

If this Mind is shaping or has shaped the visible universe, then in that universe there must be found some expression of the Mind by which it was created; not necessarily perfect or complete, but, on the contrary, partial, as is the expression of the human mind in human works. Mind, it should be remembered, is only partially expressed even in words chosen for the purpose and used with directness; in works, much more than in words, that expression is casual and comparatively indistinct. So it is probably with the expression of God in Nature.

The Formation of Opinion.

Form your own Opinion; choose your own Church; select your own Party; and then, I will not say hold to those opinions, to that church, to that party, with stupid tenacity, refusing ever to be converted or changed, but I will say hold to them with an intelligent firmness and a resolute grasp. Having done this and made sure of your

own position, then you can afford to be tolerant of the opinions of others, to give them credit for sincerity equal to your own, even to try and see things in their light, and this you can do because of your own certainty and strength.

Very frequently when men are uncertain and shifty as to their own opinions they are most uncharitable with regard to those of others.

The Two Voices.

Yesterday I was sitting in my garden. The night was drawing on but the sun was still shining. The sky was clear and apparently free from clouds. Everything was very still. The birds were at rest and the trees did not move. As I sat I heard the silence broken, not suddenly, but gradually by a far-off sound. It was the thunder, distant but loud and deep—a sound such as is never made except by thunder. There had been no lightning visible to me, and there was no cloud. It was strange to hear the great roll and see no premonitory flash. The sound seemed to come from unseen worlds with a message of things other than ours—the Voice of God himself moving in the vast fields of his own creation.

When the thunder ceased I bent my head and saw at my feet a little flower which I knew well—a flower beautiful in appearance and wonderful in structure, and, as I thought of its beauty and of all the complex mystery of its growth—of how it germinated, and evolved its blossom, and perfected its seed, and how, even, it was able, like a sentient creature, to shoot out and distribute over the land its winged seeds, I felt that God was as plain to me in the flower as in the thunder. The prophet on the mountain heard not God in the whirlwind, but only in the still small voice. I had, as it were, heard him in both—in the great rolling of thunder and in the low, sweet, whisper of the flower.

Gutter Children.

There is a rough old saying which is—"You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." That is true, but then there are "sow's ears" in the "best society," and the material for silken purses in the very lowest. Down in the very gutters of life you will find, if you could get at them, and train them, children who in ability and even in native delicacy and refinement would put to shame many of the sons and daughters in the higher ranks of life.

A CITY IDYLL.

By B. A. REDFERN.

Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantastic round. —*Milton.*

There were his young barbarians all at play.
—*Byron.*

The young contending, while the old surveyed.
—*Goldsmith.*

FORTY years ago, in recording the impressions of "A Tour"—one of a series of enforced tours by the bye—made "between Withy Grove and Newtown," Manchester, and which afterwards appeared in a local journal, the writer referred to a large space of land, never yet built upon, which is situated in one of the most crowded parts of our City.

Within the memory of one, then living, there had stood—part of it still stands—at the lower end of "Angel Meadow" a mansion, which when erected, afforded to its owners an extensive and lovely prospect of hill and vale, mead and fallow, woods and waters, on one hand; and of the growing town on the other. From the latter there came the straggling Long Millgate, with its double line of half-timbered black and white houses and shops, which, in the middle distance, made a sharp turn, and descended towards the River Irk, leaving to view on its left side the gables and carved finials of the quaintly picturesque fold (or "fowt") known as "Gibraltar." Beyond this the Scotland Bridge carried the road over to the gardens and coppices of Red Bank and Cheetham. On the right before coming to the bridge, another lane carried the high road for Yorkshire along the valley to the north, and the sloping

or terraced grounds of the mansion to which reference has been made, were bounded by this lane on their lower side. The Irk was at that time a swiftly running stream, whose waters, if not perfectly limpid, were at least pleasant to the senses, and in its many windings they fretted and "swilled" the cliffs of brown-red rock, through and round which they hurried on their way from the Cloughs of Crumpsall and Collyhurst.

In the present day there stands a grimy looking brick-built church on what was once part of the mansion grounds, and the remainder of them is occupied by a dismal churchyard, and the open space referred to. To reach the latter one must go along the old lane, now a desolate looking back street, which runs below the high dead-wall of the churchyard, until we come upon our bourne. Towards the end of the 18th century, on the occurrence of a great epidemic, several acres of land had been enclosed here for a supplementary cemetery, and after many hundreds of bodies had been interred, and the scourge had ceased its ravage the entrances to this were walled up. Then to all seeming the place was abandoned to the elements, and it became forgotten of men for at least a score of years. Old inhabitants of the neighbourhood have said that grass and other forms of vegetation grew there profusely during this period, when, though it was a solitude in itself, it was being gradually surrounded by rows of closely built houses.

In the end, however, there came a year of great rains, and the high brick walls, burst out by the floods, carried with them into the street below, much soil, the ends of many coffins, and a number of human skulls, along with other gruesome relics of mortality. These were after some delay thrown back to be roughly covered again with the soil, and the bricks were removed, but the gaps in the walling were not filled up, and the "God's Acre" thus violated was left open to the incursions of the wild tribes of Charter Street and "Th' Medder."

Then it became a handy dumping ground for all kinds of mineral, vegetable, and animal refuse, and also, incidentally, the "pitch" for many "scuttles" and even a few prize fights. Often, and especially on Sunday afternoons, what had started as a drunken squabble, was adjourned till the principals were sober, and then this Golgotha became an Aceldama, a field of blood and battle. Amongst other of these sporting encounters was one which took place in the "late 'fifties," and of which the writer was for some time a spectator. It was a most brutal and vindictive struggle between two one-armed beggars. Of these, the elder, "Bacup Billy," was a quiet creature enough until struck, when he became one to be most carefully avoided, whilst the other, known only as "Stump," always carried in his face and demeanour unmistakable danger signals.

The fight ran chiefly in favour of "Stump," until about the sixth or seventh round, when, having thrown his opponent, he kicked him in the ribs. For this foul play the chivalrous spectators would apparently have slain "Stump" on the spot, had it not been for Billy's prayers—and even tears—that the fight might be allowed to go on. This was at length permitted, and thenceforward all went in Billy's favour, until "Stump"—whilst the combatants were rolling on the ground—seized the hand of his opponent with his teeth, and bit it most savagely. Then the crowd broke in, and made a crushed and bleeding mass of "Stump," whom they left in unconscious possession of the field. "Bacup Billy" never fully recovered from his injuries; erysipelas set in, and he died within the year. It was said that "Stump" was soon once more on his legs, but it is doubtful if he ever showed his ugly face in Charter Street again by daylight.

* * * *

Well, I had not been on "Th' Owd Buryin' Ground" for many long years after this occurrence, until a certain day of mid-summer at the beginning of this century,

when as I was returning by rail from a tramp on the moorlands about "Bill's o' Jacks," and was nearing Victoria Station, I saw from the carriage window what induced me to visit the old ground on my way home.

Entering it by a flight of wide steps I came out upon a great flagged space, lit up with the glow of a rich sunset, and found it swarming with children of all ages and sizes. The pavement sloped upwards to the south-east, where a row of three-storied houses with long narrow upper windows—once almost solely occupied by fustian cutters, for whose needs of special light they had been built when that handicraft was a flourishing one—overlooked the ground. To the south and west was the church with its brick tower standing out darkly above the raised churchyard, but with the golden sunshine beautifying its western side.

At the lower, and more level, end of the flagged space, where a long row of railway arches and several great gasometers bounded the view, scores of yelling and perspiring lads, chiefly with uncovered heads and feet, and attired in mere apologies for garments, were playing games,—recognizable as "staggit," "relieve oh!" "slap-ear," "leap frog," and the like,—as if each player's life depended on his individual efforts. Elder boys and youths, of a type which in later life supplies our "hooligans," were playing football, here with a real ball, and there with one made of impacted paper (or of an old hat), bound with string. It was an exhilarating sight, and a much more interesting one to me than would have been that of a match between the so-called "City" and the "United," and I stayed to enjoy it for a few exciting minutes.

And then I found a greater attraction for my eyes and ears in what was taking place at the upper end of the enclosure. Here were groups and rings of happy girls—some of whom had younger children of both sexes in their charge—swaying, skipping, bounding, galloping, dancing,

or making sudden concerted stay in their movements as they sang simple action songs which had come down to them through the ages by many mouths from many various and distant lands and peoples.

As I walked towards the merry dancers (who supplied in their play all the human elements of a joyful carnival) there came to me many memories of occasions, when I had led or followed in these ballads "long, long ago." But these passed away quickly, and I became conscious only of pleasurable emotion as I took my stand on the flagged passage outside the railings, where stood or sat a few men in shirt sleeves, smoking their thick twist, now giving a glance at the children, and now spelling out a paragraph of evening news.

Above us on the high steps of the houses, some busy blowsy housewife would make her appearance, and first taking a clothes peg or a hair pin out of her mouth, would utter unquotable threats to her unheeding offspring below, or would exchange a few rough but good-humoured words with one of the men as she shook out a dusty mat or a ragged table cloth.

An older girl or woman, addressed by the children as "Treezer," and by their elders as "Missis Riley," was here, there, and everywhere amongst the juveniles, and seemed to be getting as much fun out of the play as even the youngest of the revellers. I remarked this to a cheerful looking navvy who stood by my side, as I handed him a light for his pipe.

"Augh, ay," said he, "that gur-r-l's a holy terror. Oi interfared wit' her *wanst*. But niver agen. Oi got a jab an the jaw for ut. But see thim childther, just luk, how they lane an her! God bliss her, annyhow!"

I stayed there some half hour, listening delightedly to ancient folk-songs like "Rise, Sally Water, rise if you can," "Mary sat a weepin'," "Silly old man, he walks alone," and above all to the charmingly melodious

"Ballade" with its jingling refrain, known as "There came three Dukes a ridin'."

And when in the descending twilight I left the scene of this City Idyll, I could still hear the sweet fresh voices of the children borne on the summer air as they sang the merry roundelay of "Green grow the leaves on the hawthorn tree," a statement which I would have been glad to think they had full opportunity to verify for themselves. Gradually the grateful sounds were subdued by distance, and when I could no longer hear them, I found myself walking through a district of disenchanting "slums" on my way to the tram. Suddenly the voice of "Big Abel," sullenly and slowly, proclaiming the hour, boomed out through and over the lessening sounds of the lately busy City, and I was reminded by it that the worthy City Father, after whom the bell was named, was the man to whom we were chiefly indebted for the conversion of the old plague spot into a playground.

It had been by turns a pleasaunce, and a charnel; a hidden green solitude, and a filthy abomination in the sight of all men; a battle field for human fiends, and eventually a place of joy for God's fairest creatures, though they may be in this case only humbly arrayed. A place which, like that other one referred to by Dr. Johnson, has been "paved with good intentions" but which, unlike that other one, has warranted its paviours by the results. And to-day I am of opinion that no possession of our Municipality is, or has been more useful or profitable to the community, in proportion to its original cost and that of its up-keep, than is the possession of St. Michael's Flags in "The Angel Meadow."

JOHN GALSWORTHY.

By J. J. RICHARDSON.

MR. John Galsworthy's emergence from the crowd of writers who are unknown, from the insignificance of one writing under a pseudonym, to an assured and foremost position among the few whose work is likely to have any influence upon our time, has been rapid. But his good fortune is thoroughly deserved. He has thought before he wrote and his preparation for his vocation has been slow and deliberate. He is not of the youthful geniuses who spring fully armed into the arena of literature and display at once their superiority over their fellow gladiators. He is a man, now forty-four years of age, who has by strenuous effort developed his talent, and during the last half dozen years given us some of the most interesting, most thoughtful, and most carefully written work of our day.

His first two novels were published under the pseudonym of "John Sinjohn." Both these have been since revised and shortened, and issued under his own name. In 1904 appeared "The Island Pharisees," and of this novel, four years later, he also revised a new edition; thus showing the seriousness of spirit which he has brought to literature, and the desire he has to express himself to the fullest extent of his artistic powers. In 1906 his comedy, "The Silver Box," was produced at the Court Theatre, London. At intervals of about a year he has since published as novels "The Country House," "The Man of Property," and "Fraternity"; two volumes of short stories and sketches under the titles of "A Commentary," and "A Motley"; a play on the letter "I," called "Joy," his drama "Strife," and the tragedy, "Justice."

Though it is no uncommon thing for writers to venture into various forms of their art yet it is a rare occurrence in literature for anyone to achieve equal distinction in three diverse branches. For Mr. Galsworthy, I think, it may be claimed that his novels, his plays, and his short stories are alike successful, and that it is quite an open question in which form of art he is seen at his best. Whilst of this opinion as regards his work I do not assert that any of it can be dignified by the word great. It is full of keen observation, it is clever, it is interesting, almost fascinating, but its limitations are serious. It is deficient in the chief elements that make for greatness in artistic production. In the two main essentials of literary art,—imagination and humour—it is distinctly lacking. Every man, every artist, has his limitations. Shakespeare, the supreme artist in our language, perhaps in any language, did not touch life at all points, did not appreciate all its varied aspects. As a man he had his lack of knowledge, and his lack of sympathy, with certain phases of character, and as an artist he did not possess the power to construct a plot or invent a story,—for to my mind it was want of power not carelessness that made him content to annex these, as it was ignorance that caused his mistakes in geography,—but he had the incomparable endowment of a fine imagination and a deep humour, combined with a magnificent command of all the varied resources of his native language. To-day there is a dearth of these gifts. Our living writers have little humour and less imagination. They are critical rather than creative. With all their cleverness, which is at times almost too obvious; with all their knowledge and insight into human character, which it would be difficult to deny; with all their fine literary craftsmanship, which is beyond question, what writer of this century has created any personage so distinctly individual as to stand in a similar relation to us as do so many of the characters we are familiar with in the novels of the last century?

Who has added one portrait to the gallery of imaginary beings with whom we are better acquainted than with most of the real people we are brought into daily contact with? And this is the supreme test of artistic work—the power of creation.

Dickens's style may at times be sentimental, even tawdry, Thackeray may burden his work by inartistic moralisings, and George Eliot become pedantically philosophical, but each had creative power. The literary technique, the artistry, of present day novelists may be superior in some ways to those of the past but in the essential qualities that give permanent value to a work of fiction they are sadly deficient. We have many clever writers, but we have no great ones.

It may be that the spirit of the time has a great deal to do with this lack of great work, for artists, though they influence the age in which they live, are also the products of it. The optimism which characterised the middle of the last century when, with the rapid progress in mechanical invention, the surprising discoveries of science, the rapid growth of wealth, an era of continuous peace and plenty seemed to be assured to posterity in the near future, has been succeeded by the pessimism which is the note of the first decade of this century. It is more than probable that this is only a natural recoil from the exuberant anticipations of half a century ago, and that the wheel will come full circle again, but at present those of our writers who are something more than amusement caterers, or panders to the taste for books dealing in a sensual manner with sexual matters, are nearly all under the depressing shadow of what has been termed the "ache of modernism," and none more so, perhaps, than Mr. Galsworthy. Like all artists he is intensely impressionable to the influences around him, but, while some seek an escape from the sordid pressure of actual life in an endeavour to realise their dreams in a self-created world of romance, he aims to reflect the age in which he lives,

to exhibit its hardships, its difficulties, and what seems to him its diseased condition.

Mr. Galsworthy is not, so far as I know, an avowed socialist like Mr. Bernard Shaw, or Mr. H. G. Wells, or Mr. Maurice Hewlett, but it seems to me that the tendency of his thought is in that direction; and that he would seek the solution of our social problems through the re-organisation of society rather than through the regeneration of the individual. Without pressing this debatable point, though it seems to me fore-shadowed in his latest novel, "*Fraternity*," it cannot be denied that the interest he displays in his characters lies less in their individual passions, desires, hopes, their vices and their virtues, than in the relation of these to society. To him the individual seems to appeal chiefly as a unit in a complex and badly organised social structure, and he uses him mainly as a vehicle for exposing the defects of our present system. Is not this aspect of his work shown in the titles he has chosen for his books?

He has not followed the practice of the classic novelists and named his novels after the chief character in each book. The titles he has adopted are quite as appropriate to the story as were those of "*Tom Jones*" or "*Jane Eyre*," "*Pamela*" or "*Pendennis*," "*David Copperfield*" or "*Diana of the Crossways*," for each of his novels has a theme, and depicts a phase of life. And these are summed up in such titles as "*The Island Pharisees*," "*The Country House*," "*The Man of Property*," "*Fraternity*." His plots, again, do not follow the traditional lines of being centred round the adventures of a hero, or a heroine, but are woven around his subject matter. There are in fact no heroes or heroines in his books, and it might almost be added no adventures. Each novel has, of course, a story running through it but it is not a matter of serious importance to the book, for the fascination of Mr. Galsworthy's work does not lie in an ingenious plot, or in a well-told story. He is fully conscious of this absence of

what usually makes a novel interesting, and popular, but the deficiency does not concern him. Mr. Galsworthy has something to say and one of the mediums he has chosen through which to express himself and his ideas is fiction. He does not seek a popular success, and he is little likely to achieve it. His work does two things which must ever stand in the way of his audience being a large one. It causes us to think, and it renders us mentally uncomfortable. And the average consumer of fiction usually reads for the purpose of avoiding both these disconcerting, if not tiresome, operations of the mind. The point of view of the average reader finds expression in some words Mr. Galsworthy puts into the mouth of one of his characters in "The Island Pharisees," who has picked up a novel at his club, and says of it:—

"Rippin plot. When you get hold of a novel you don't want any rot about . . . what do you call it? . . . psychology, you want to be amused."

Of the same novel another character feels that there is—

"Something fatuous about this story, for though it had a thrilling plot, and was full of well-connected people, it had apparently been contrived to throw no light on anything whatever. He looked at the author's name; everyone was highly recommending it."

In this latter extract I think we have Mr. Galsworthy expressing his own convictions, not merely the views of an imaginary character. He looks upon the novel as a form of art worthy of being something more than a means of amusement, or an anodyne to allay the boredom of a weary hour. He sees in it a fitting vehicle to throw light upon life, to illuminate a subject. And it is in this serious spirit that we must approach Mr. Galsworthy's work. Not seeking merely a means of recreation, though in his fine literary presentation of life and in his subtle irony we get that, but to enlarge our views, to widen our thoughts about humanity, and to see the visible world with deeper sympathy.

In an article on "Joseph Conrad," contributed to the *Fortnightly Review*, Mr. Galsworthy wrote:—

Eyes. It seems a little thing. But to see is the greatest thing of all. The surface of the world is open to everybody's gaze, that which lies behind the surface is what lies in the gazer's soul, the beauty which everyday phenomena evoke out of the seer's consciousness. Everything is beautiful to those who have the humour to perceive. Birth and decay, youth and old age.

This gift of being able to "see" has its two qualities. That of observation of what is on the surface and which may be, as Mr. Galsworthy says, "open to everybody's gaze," but which is, after all, only seen by the few, for the majority have eyes and see not; and that of seeing beneath the surface, of divining by an instinctive power, as it were, what is hidden from others, and out of this vision fashioning a philosophy of life, and becoming a seer or prophet.

With the former of these qualities Mr. Galsworthy is richly endowed. His powers of observation are exceptionally acute. His books are full of minute touches that disclose to us how vividly he sees numberless things that would be unnoticed by the ordinary observer. So closely observed are many of the trifling details of life that one of my earliest impressions on reading his novels was that the name of "John Galsworthy" concealed the identity of a woman. And I still think that the dominant note of his work is feminine rather than virile. This keenness of perception, however, is in relation to persons and to traits of character and feeling. Towards scenery and locality Mr. Galsworthy appears almost indifferent. He has none of the striving after local colour, the desire to paint in words the charm of a foreign land, or the wildness and beauty of some unfamiliar region, which is so characteristic of many living novelists. He is not interested in the surroundings, I mean the scenic surroundings, of his

characters, but in the characters themselves, and in an analysis of their motives, and of the results of their actions. This is so pronounced a feature in his work that at first it gives an impression of bareness when compared with many of our novelists. It is also, when we think to what an excess this word painting of scenery has been carried, something to be thankful for.

The only one of his novels where the action takes place out of our own country is the early "Villa Rubein." Here the scenic setting is in the Tyrol, but for all that we learn of that picturesque region it might as well have been laid in familiar Derbyshire. Yet with this apparent indifference to natural scenery, Mr. Galsworthy has a warm sensitiveness to the forces of nature, to the wind and the sun, to the scent of trees and the song of birds, to the incommunicable charm of spring. Take this passage from the "Villa Rubein":—

The wind, stirring and rustling among the trees and bushes, flung the young leaves skywards. The trembling of their silver linings was like a flutter of Joy at some message of good news. It was one of those Spring mornings when everything seems full of sweet restlessness—soft clouds chasing across the sky, soft scents mingling and dying away, the notes of birds, now too shrill and sweet, now hushed in long silences—when all nature is striving for something, and nothing seems quite in its place.

This note of the "sweet restlessness" of Nature in spring is one that is constantly recurrent in his novels, and forms the motive of his latest published short story in "A Motley," entitled "The Japanese Quince."

By the side of this description of a spring morning let us place that of the night when Thyme and Martin in "Fraternity," made their way to Hampstead and from the high ground looked down upon the luminous haze of mighty London. It has the same note as the earlier writing but with a deeper tone. It has caught something of the harmony of great prose.

From that rampart of the town, the Spaniard's Road, two plains lay exposed to left and right; the scent of maytree blossom had stolen up the hill; the rising moon clung to a fir-tree bough. Over the country the far stars presided, and sleep's dark wings were spread above the fields—silent, scarce breathing, lay the body of the land. But to the south, where the town, that restless head, was lying, the stars seemed to have fallen and were sown in the thousand furrows of its great grey marsh, and from the dark miasma of those streets there travelled up a rustle, a whisper, the far allurements of some deathless dancer dragging men to watch the swirl of her black, spangled drapery, the gleam of her writhing limbs. Like the song of the sea in a shell was the murmur of that witch of motion, clasping to her the souls of men, drawing them down into a soul whom none had ever seen to rest.

The difference in style, and in thought, between these two passages, one from his earliest and one from his latest novel, reflects the serious change, and the great advance, Mr. Galsworthy has made in his art, not only in style as a writer but in suggestiveness as a thinker. The progress is shown continuously in his other works, for each novel, and the same may be said of his plays, with the possible exception of "Justice," is better than its predecessor. The "Villa Rubein," like his early play "Joy," has a touch of comedy, a sense of youth in it. It is the only one of Mr. Galsworthy's novels that can be called a love story. The passion of love, which is such a pronounced feature in modern fiction and which so many writers have dealt with as the supreme factor in life, makes but a slight appeal to Mr. Galsworthy. Where they have made love the predominant interest, and around it woven the plots of their stories, he allows it only a minor influence upon his characters. It is true that in each of his novels there is a thread of passion traversing the web of his story, but one feels as if Mr. Galsworthy's view of love is a somewhat mocking one, that he regards love, after all, as not so

much a passion but the force in Nature that ensures the continuance of the race : a force that is born on

Such a Spring day as breathes into a man an ineffable yearning, a painful sweetness, a longing that makes him stand motionless, looking at the leaves or grass, and fling out his arms to embrace he knows not what.

Or as he wrote of Soames Forsyte in "The Man of Property,"

And as Soames stood looking at her the sensation that most men have felt at one time or another went stealing through him—a peculiar satisfaction of the senses, a peculiar certainty, which novelists and old ladies call love at first sight.

Even in the "Villa Rubein," the awakening of the passion of love in the breast of Christian is not the central *motif* of the story. That lies in the everlasting conflict between the warm and generous impulses of youth, the desire to enjoy, and assert itself, regardless of consequences, and the caution and restraint of age which, through experience, has been taught the instability and impermanence of the most powerful feelings—between the selfishness of youth and the selfishness of old age. In the embodiment of age in the person of uncle Nicholas Treffry, the gruff but lovable old bachelor, we have one, if not the best, of the bits of character drawing that Mr. Galsworthy has given us. To my mind there is no one so distinctly human in any of his later books. Christian gets the better of her uncle, and attains her desire. She marries the man she loves, the Tyrolese artist, with his indifference towards money and his intense longing to express his individuality in art. During their love making his keen desire for possession has drawn away his mind from the pursuit of his art, but, with marriage, he turns again to his painting, and his art becomes to him possibly more than his wife. Christian says that she is happy and has no wish to change her life, but we are made

conscious that she feels there is something lacking. To her love has come into her life as wonderful, as supreme, but she, like all youth, has to learn that life cannot be lived entirely on a high plane, that it has to be made up of compromise.

None of Mr. Galsworthy's novels, not even his earliest, finish in the key of optimism, on a happy note, and in his latest, "*Fraternity*," we feel that his outlook upon life has saddened with his wider experience, that his ironical way of viewing things has become intensified, that his thought has assumed a deeper pessimism. This charge of being a pessimist is one we often hear brought against Mr. Galsworthy, but I use the word in relation to his cast of thought with some diffidence for, in a passage in "*The Country House*," he seems to be uttering a protest against this judgment on his manner of seeing things. He says,

When Gregory Vigil called Mr. Paramor a pessimist it was because, like other people, he did not know the meaning of the term. For with a confusion common to the minds of many persons who have been conceived in misty moments, he thought that, to see things as they were, meant to try and make them worse.

Mr. Galsworthy undoubtedly sees things as they are, he is under no delusion as to the facts of life, he casts no glamour of romance upon them, and hence what is called his pessimism: and I can quite sympathise with those who do not like, and who feel no interest in his work. Yet it is impossible to deny him a sincere purpose in his writing, and an eager desire to assist in the alleviation of social hardships and injustices. He feels keenly the misery and wretchedness he sees around him. He is no blind optimist, like the fortunate poet Browning, who never learnt in suffering what he taught in song, and who could utter that comfortable thought, "God's in His Heaven. All's right with the world." Mr. Galsworthy has made acquaintance with the dark and dreary underworld of modern civilisation. He has seen something of

the lives of those who suffer, partly through their own fault, it may be, but also in a large measure through the undeniable evils of our social system. He knows that all is not right with the world, however pleasant a one it may be to the well-to-do.

Where it seems to me difficult to deny his pessimism is in his apparent lack of hope. Without hope how is it possible to regard the future of the race with other feelings than those of pessimism? Even if we think that, however great the ills of life, there is still a balance of pleasure over pain it can only be in the conviction that this balance is a growing one that we can be really optimists. Among his short stories there is one ironically entitled, "Hope," and the closing words are

In the crowded highway, beside his basket, he stood, leaning on his twisted stick, with his tired, steadfast face—a ragged statue to the great unconscious human virtue, the most hopeful and inspiring of all things on earth. Courage without Hope.

And the thought here expressed is not an isolated one. In the figure of the old philosopher, Mr. Stone, in "Fraternity," with the extracts from his never-to-be-finished, "Book of Universal Brotherhood," it is usually assumed that Mr. Galsworthy is speaking in his own person, and, like the chorus in the old Greek drama, helping to make clear the moral purpose of his story. Here is an extract from the "Book of Universal Brotherhood,"

In the condition of society, dignified in those days with the name of civilisation, the only source of hope was the persistence of the quality of courage. Amongst a thousand nerve-destroying habits, amongst the dram shops, patent medicines, the undigested chaos of inventions and discoveries, whilst hundreds were prating in their pulpits of things believed in by a negligible fraction of the population, and thousands writing down to-day what nobody would want to read in two days' time, while men shut animals in cages, and made bears jig to please the children, and all were striving one

against the other, while in a word, like gnats above a stagnant pool on a summer's evening, man danced up and down without the faintest notion why—in this condition of affairs the quality of courage was alive. It was the only fire within that gloomy valley.

It may be, after all, that Mr. Galsworthy is by no means so devoid of hope, so lacking in faith in the future of the human race as the pessimistic impression his writings leave upon us. If his mental attitude were such why should he in his writings, as I think he undoubtedly does, seek to arouse our sympathies for the helpless and unfortunate, the derelicts of civilisation. The logical outcome of pessimism is to acquiesce in, if not to desire the gradual extinction of mankind, the absorption of all intelligence into the tranquil Nirvana of nothingness.

Though with him, as with all artists, the chief stimulus to self-expression is the desire to make manifest his individuality, yet his aim in both his novels and his plays is to arouse the consciousness of his readers, or his audience, to thoughts of life's inequalities and injustices, to the waste of human effort through personal prejudices and obstinate, unreasoning differences of opinion, and the urgent need for greater moderation, gentleness and sympathy in our social relations.

I look upon it as temperamental on his part to see most clearly the weaker side of human nature, to dwell upon its faults rather than its good qualities, but as Hilary Dallison replies to his niece Thyme, when the young girl impulsively cries, "I think it horrible to have a low opinion of human nature,"

"My dear, don't you think, perhaps, that people who have what is called a low opinion of human nature are really more tolerant of it, more in love with it, in fact, than those who looking to what human nature might be, are bound to hate what human nature is?"

It is possible also that there is more of pity and of human kindness in the pessimistic temperament than in

that of the comfortable self-satisfied optimist. At least we know that of the two great pessimistic philosophers Leopardi was a kindly, gentle soul, and that Schopenhauer, though he died an old bachelor, was not a bad natured man and was extremely kind to animals. Human nature is by no means logical, and it would not be nearly so interesting if it were.

Whatever hesitation we may have in deciding how far Mr. Galsworthy is a pessimist there can be none in asserting that the most interesting characters in his novels are those who feel a discontent with their social surroundings. I say their social surroundings advisedly, for it is not a selfish discontent, a dissatisfaction with what they as individuals have accomplished, with the position they have gained, or the chances they have missed, it is a social not a personal discontent. And these characters from his several novels are cast in different moulds, and come forth with very different temperaments, yet each is conscious of a revolt against his conventional life, against the mediocre, comfortable, sensual people with whom he is associated, people who, in their contented self-satisfaction, are impervious to fresh ideas. We can easily recall these varied types. There is the vagabond type Ferrand, in "The Island Pharisees," the philosophic visionary Mr. Stone, the severely practical, his nephew Martin, and the cultured and thoughtful men of the world, in the best and truest sense of the phrase, Shelton, Hilary Dallison, and Gregory Vigil.

And, though in a lesser degree, we see the same feelings being manifested in his most interesting female characters, Mrs. Pendyce, Irene Forsyte, Cecilia Dallison. These have not reached that stage of discontent so evident in the male personages but that the subtle influence of what is going on around them, though they are far from realising it distinctly, has its effect upon temperaments. They are, so to speak, haunted by "that queer new thing," to use Mr. Galsworthy's words,

a Social Conscience, the dim bogey stalking pale about the houses of those who, through the accidents of leisure or culture, had once left the door open to the suspicion Is it possible that there is a class of people besides my own, or am I dreaming? Happy the millions, poor or rich, not yet condemned to watch the wistful visiting or hear the husky mutter of that ghost, happy in their homes, blessed by a less disquieting god. Such were Cecilia's inner feelings.

But Cecilia is only a creature moving about in worlds not realised. She is only partly conscious of this altruistic spirit in the air, she is a victim of circumstances and can offer her protest against this stalking ghost, and can wonder, when the successful and self-satisfied Mr. Purcey, who "was not even conscious that there was a problem of the poor," had taken her for a run in his Al Danyer car, why she and her people could not be like him, "so sound and healthy, so innocent of a social conscience, so content." And so when she hears that the discharged soldier Hughs, with a wife and family, is pursuing the young model with his attentions she is puzzled.

That a man of Hughs' class might be affected by the passion of love had somehow never come into her head. She thought of the back streets she had looked out on from her bedroom window. Could anything like passion spring up in those dismal alleys? The people who lived there, poor down-trodden things, had enough to do to keep themselves alive. She knew all about them, they were in the air, their condition was deplorable. Could a person whose condition was deplorable find time or strength for any sort of lurid exhibition such as this? It was incredible.

Whether this "queer new thing, a Social Conscience," as Mr. Galsworthy calls it, is really any distinct growth of our time, or merely a change in the manifestation of the spirit of unselfishness, due to a reaction, among the more cultured, against the extreme commercialism, and growing luxury of our day, seems to me to be a very open question. There is nothing new in altruism, and the

spirit of self-sacrifice has been preached for nearly two thousand years. History contains many records of efforts which have been made in the past to alleviate the miseries of the unfortunate and to help to regenerate the human race. The word that is so frequently used when referring to the various schemes of social improvement—the “crusade” against this or that evil—does it not come down to us from its association with that great religious movement in the twelfth century under Richard I, and which has had no parallel in later times.

It may be that we are morally superior to our forefathers, that there is a greater leaven of kindness abroad, an increasing sympathy between the various classes of society, and that Mr. Galsworthy in showing the influence of these forces upon the more cultured and more sensitive of the upper middle classes is justified in styling it “That queer new thing, Social Conscience.”

The trend of his work is to awaken the consciousness of his readers to these new social ideas. In “Fraternity,” we are shown their effect upon the refined and intellectual Dallison family who are of “an old Oxfordshire family, which for three hundred years at least had served the Church or State.” In his previous novel, “The Man of Property,” he depicts in the Forsyte family, and a wonderfully clever and illuminating study it is, the impact of new and disquieting ideas upon those whose wealth has been recently acquired, and whose tenacity in regard to their property and position in society is dogged. Young Jolyon Forsyte, who is somewhat a sport from the original stock and has declassed himself by a marital irregularity, describes the genus in these words,

“We are, of course, all of us slaves of property, and I admit that it's question of degree, but what I call a Forsyte, is a man who is decidedly more than less a slave of property. He knows a good thing, he knows a safe thing, and his grip on property—it doesn't matter whether it be wives, houses, money or reputation—is his hall-mark.”

The Forsytes are not stupid, they have commonsense, but they are one ideal, they have no imagination. And Mr. Galsworthy makes an apt use of that delicious, but by no means common, dish—a saddle of mutton—to illustrate their essential qualities. He says—

No Forsyte has given a dinner without providing a saddle of mutton. There is something in its succulent solidity which makes it suitable to people "of a certain position." It is nourishing and tasty, the sort of thing a man remembers eating. It has a past and a future like a deposit paid into the bank, and it is something that can be argued about. . . . To anyone interested psychologically in Forsytes, this great saddle of mutton trait is of prime importance. Not only does it illustrate their tenacity, both collectively and as individuals, but it marks them as belonging in fibre and instincts to that great class which believes in nourishment and flavour, and yields to no sentimental craving for beauty.

In his delineation of this family, with its many and varied members, on dubious terms of affection, mistrusting and disliking one another, but united by one common bond of property, Mr. Galsworthy's spirit of comedy and his ironic humour are seen at their best. His satire goes deeper than a mere attack upon social manners or eccentricities of character. It touches the foundations upon which the class system of society is built.

This ironic presentation of life is the most characteristic note of Mr. Galsworthy's work. He is not, to use his own words, one "by whom the irony underlying the affairs of men is unseen and unenjoyed." He is keenly alert to "life's little ironies," as may be seen in innumerable passages of comment and description. Take this one of the room tenanted by Hughs, the discharged soldier, in "Fraternity,"

There was a dingy bed, two chairs and a wash stand, with one leg, supported by an aged footstall. Clothes and garments were hanging on nails, pans lay about the hearth, a sewing machine stood on a bare deal table.

And then comes this touch

Over the bed was hung an oleograph, from a Christmas number supplement, of the birth of Jesus, and above it a bayonet, under which was printed in an illiterate hand on a rough scroll of paper, "Gave three of 'em what for at Elandslaagte. S. Hughs."

Or this, in a more genial spirit, from the scene in the Club in "The Island Pharisees,"

The moon-faced member with the patent boots came up and began talking of his recent visit to the south of France. He had a scandalous anecdote or two to tell, and his broad face beamed behind his gold nose-nippers: he was a large man with such a store of easy, worldly humour that it was impossible not to appreciate his gossip, he gave so perfect an impression of enjoying life, and doing himself well. "Well, good night," he murmured, "An engagement." And the certainty he left behind him that his engagement must be charming and illicit was pleasant to the soul.

To my mind this is as delightful as it is true, and a sketch that has no needless line.

Mr. Galsworthy's irony has not the virile humour of Fielding's; it is more akin to the delicate satire of Jane Austen, but with a greater seriousness, an added note of bitterness. Jane Austen was an optimist, Mr. Galsworthy, to say the least, is not; but they have many points in common. They are both keenly susceptible to the finer shades of character and conduct in the comedy of life, and they are both limited in the range of the social classes they depict. In Jane Austen there is practically only the one class, that of the well-to-do gentry of country life who are in touch with, but not of, the "county families." The nobility at one end of the social ladder, and the shopkeepers, artisans, and poor people at the other, are hardly recognised in the world she describes. We know that they must exist but she tells us nothing about them in her novels, for they did not interest her. She has no more concern with them than she has with the criminal classes. And in like manner Mr. Galsworthy deals with

almost the same class and with similar omissions, for he has no interest in, or at least does not deal with, the criminal class. Where he differs from Jane Austen is that, particularly in his later work, and in his short stories, he uses, as a foil to the people he knows so well, that most appalling mass of shiftless, pitiable people who herd together in the mean streets of our large towns, or find shelter in common lodging houses. Not criminal in their habits but helpless, aimless, and patient amid their sordid surroundings.

Another point of similarity between these two writers is their singular indifference to the scenic setting of their stories. They seldom indulge in any description of scenery, and they seem equally devoid of any sense of locality. This deficiency does not occur to us as we read their novels, for we are so interested in their acute analysis of character, but it does when we recall how so many of Dickens's creations, for instance, are identified with the streets and squares of London, or how greatly the charm of Mr. Thomas Hardy's novels is due to their vivid and imaginative descriptions of the villages and heaths of Wessex. Again, though all Jane Austen's novels have a love interest running through them yet she never depicts it as passion. Passionate love has no place in her respectable world, and in Mr. Galsworthy's, even if it be suggested, is never described. It may be that both are possessed of too keen a sense of the ridiculous; too conscious of their artistic limitations, to attempt to go outside their own experience. This restraint is equally obvious in their style, and is, I think, one of the charms of their writings. They do not make their characters speak in glittering epigrams, they avoid mannerisms, and those freakish modes of writing which often pass current now-a-days for paradoxical brilliancy, or adumbrations of profound thought. They are content with simplicity and lucidity, and do not desire to force language beyond its chief function of clear expression.

Though each of them views life ironically yet neither of them is a cynic. Of the two Jane Austen has the greater creative power. Her gift borders upon that of genius. Her knowledge of life and character seem to have come to her intuitively. Her best novels were written whilst she was little more than a girl, and when her experience of life must have been extremely limited. It is difficult to understand how she acquired it. Mr. Galsworthy, on the other hand, appears to have attained his as the result of continuous effort, by accumulation, and great reflective power. But in both of them the delicacy of their art, the perfect finish they give to their work, make their novels reveal fresh beauties on a second or third reading. And this, surely, is no small praise when we consider how little of the great mass of fiction that has been written in our day will bear the test of even a second reading.

One difference between them may be noticed. In Jane Austen the female characters are undeniably more interesting than the male, in Mr. Galsworthy's novels we find our interest is caught more by his men than his women. Here, no doubt is where Nature comes in and asserts herself. It is a matter of the difference of sex. Each sex naturally knows best its own, and especially where writers are dealing with life not in an unrestrained romantic manner but in a realistic spirit. Both Jane Austen and Mr. Galsworthy are stern, unbending realists who seek to portray life and character as they see it around them, with sincerity, and in a high and dry light that intensifies the effect of unromantic vision. And the realism of Mr. Galsworthy is akin to that of Jane Austen. It has no sympathy with what is so often called realism—a too insistent dwelling upon what is sordid, and nauseous, upon those details of life which, however familiar they may be to us, decency forbids us to refer to.

One feels a diffidence in using the word "realism," because of its unpleasant associations with writers like

Zola, Gorki, and the author of "A Mummer's Wife," but as George Gissing once wrote, "Realism signifies nothing more than artistic sincerity in the portrayal of contemporary life, it merely contrasts with the habit of mind which assumes that a novel is written to please people, that disagreeable facts must always be kept out of sight, that human nature must be systematically flattered, that the book must have a plot, that the story should end on a cheerful note and all the rest of it." It is in this sense that Mr. Galsworthy is a realist, as George Gissing was. Whilst, on this ground at least, there is a certain likeness between the work of these two writers yet their outlook upon life is quite distinct, and differs more widely than their style in presenting it. In Gissing there is nothing of the sentimentalist. For many years his life was an unfortunate one, almost it became an embittered one. He lived, through hard necessity, in contact with that "nether world" which he has so vividly described, and it destroyed his sentiment about it. His desire was to escape from these shadows in the streets, to get away from all such debasing influences. He may have been, like one of his characters, "born in exile," but he had no wish to remain in it. He longed for the refinements, both intellectual and physical, of life. His revolt was against the squalid, the mean, the depressing, whilst Mr. Galsworthy's is against the comfortable, the self-satisfied, the content. George Gissing was under no such delusion as that there are no wholly bad people in the world. He knew that there existed those whose natures are depraved, quite apart from their environment.

But in Mr. Galsworthy's novels there are no wicked people. His world contains the selfish, the prejudiced, the weak, the unfortunate, but no one really bad. He never shows us the working of the passions of hate, or greed, or jealousy, and, as the reverse of this, no high heroism, no passionate love, no self-sacrifice. And, for this reason possibly, he never arouses our deeper

sympathies for his characters. We do not follow their actions with anxious solicitude as to what will happen to them, for we are not keenly interested. He places them before us with such cold aloofness, in such a high and dry light, that we think of them less as human beings than as suffering, or enjoying, units in a social structure. I could not name a page in any of his novels that would compel you to tears, nor one that would awaken in you the joy of laughter. And this is the more to be wondered at when we think of what a strange grip Mr. Galsworthy's work has upon us.

Take his drama, "Strife." Think of that first scene in the Board Room, where so little happens, and yet how we are held by it. Then as the drama proceeds how our feelings are constrained, how the pathos of the situation develops, what an interest we feel in the struggle between the capitalist, John Anthony, and the labour leader, David Roberts. And yet "nothing is here for tears." At his comedy, "The Silver Box," we may laugh, but it is not the hearty laugh that comes from an appreciation of deep humour, and whilst we laugh we feel almost ashamed at having done so, but we are provoked to it by the truths so ironically expressed.

Mr. Galsworthy calls his latest play a tragedy, but to my mind it is deficient in the true tragic note. It is intensely painful, but it wounds our feelings rather than refines them, as tragedy should, by calling forth our deepest pity. Our sympathies are not sufficiently awakened by the weakling Falder. We regard him as only a peg upon which to hang an indictment of certain dangers and evils of our prison system. There is a too evident desire to plead the cause of the morally weak who sin hap-hazard, hardly knowing that they are sinning, who are victims of, rather than aggressors against, the laws of society. As a protest against social injustice it may be powerful, but as a play it is only painful and unpleasant. One has a natural reluctance to find fault

with a writer for his excess of sympathy with the weak and suffering, just as one would find it repugnant to ridicule, however foolish it may seem, the idealism of "Don Quixote," and his inability to see things as they are, and not mistake windmills for giants, or rough serving wenches at an inn for fine ladies.

A French writer—Anatole France—has finely said that "God is everywhere present in his work and no where visible, so should an author be in his work." This canon of art Mr. Galsworthy appears to be forgetting, and is in danger of becoming too visible in his work. He is overstepping the province of the artist, stripping himself of his restraint, and arraying himself in the mantle of the propagandist. His later work shows a decided tendency towards the sentimentalism that has become so pronounced a feature of our day. One can only regard this as unfortunate and hope that he will rise superior to such weakness, and recover a true artistic serenity of mind and temper.

Lord Morley, in a recent address on Literature, has commended two qualities, for one of which he says:—

I must, against my will use a French word—Sanity and justesse. Sanity you know well, at least by name. Justesse is no synonym for justice. It is more like equity, balance, fair mind, measure, reserve.

Of this Mr. Galsworthy is fully conscious, for in that fine sketch, "A Portrait," in the volume entitled "A Motley," he says of his subject:—

I despair of seeing his like again. For with him there seems to have passed away a principle, a golden rule of life, nay, more, a spirit—the soul of balance.

It is this "balance" that Mr. Galsworthy seems in danger of losing in his intense pre-occupation with social problems. We look forward to his next book with eager expectancy, not unmingled with fear, so keen has been our pleasure in his fascinating work.

CONTENTS BILLS.

By WILLIAM HARRISON.

I N attempting to deal with this subject, I am conscious that it is one which is not often thought worthy of treatment from the literary standpoint. Contents bills indeed, if thought about at all, are probably regarded as altogether outside literature. One might be inclined to class them with Charles Lamb's *biblia a-biblia* but for the fact that they are not books at all. If it be granted that they are literature within the widest acceptance of the term, as being recorded thought or knowledge, one must admit that it is literature of the most ephemeral kind. For, except in front of shops kept by newsagents of an unbusinesslike tendency, you would seek in vain for even yesterday's productions. They seem but,

base ephemerals, so born
To die before the next revolving morn.

a base but constant breed
Whose swarming sons their short-lived sires succeed.

Nor is there ever any attempt to preserve specimens. Occasionally we do hear of misguided persons who make a hobby of collecting pictorial placards, alleged to be artistic; but who ever heard of a collector of old contents bills, however scarce they may be? Nevertheless let us see if we cannot find something of interest even in these despised sheets.

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When, and in what circumstances, contents bills originated I do not know. My friend Dryasdust, always eager to establish historical parallels, has a theory that newsboys (with, of course, contents bills) must have been an institution in Old Testament times. How else, he asks, do we account for such passages as "Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem," "Run ye to and fro through the streets," "Cry aloud," "Lift up thy voice," and that well-known one about telling good tidings to Jerusalem. Then he points to the injunction: "Publish it not in the streets of Askelon," as obviously addressed to the newsvendors of that city when their contents bills were jubilantly announcing "Great Victory at Gilboa. King Saul and Jonathan killed." All which no doubt sounds very plausible. But I confess I have learned to distrust my friend's intuitions as to what happened in the remote past, and therefore I will not suggest that they are to be accepted as authenticated facts.

The true object of a contents bill should be, as its name implies, to set forth the principal contents of the newspaper whose name and date it bears, not merely, as is so frequently the case at present, one item alone, but a selection tolerably wide. The time will be in the recollection of most of us when this rule was regularly observed, the size of type indicating by nice gradations the relative importance of the various items. You could not then miss being apprised of any important happening, and as the largest type was used only for really great events, you could on these occasions see from afar that something startling had happened, and in approaching gradually shape the letters into words, jumping perhaps at first to wrong conclusions, but gradually obtaining certainty. The rule has long been broken in the case of the daily papers. Its first infractions came with the evening sheets, and the special editions issued in the course of the day to announce one single but important item of news. From them the habit has spread to the morning papers, which

tend more and more to select a single and often unimportant item as representative of the news of the day. Seeing that the various papers seldom agree as to what *is* the most representative item, a row of half a dozen contents bills side by side (very picturesque they sometimes look in their varied colours) will often present you with as many different items, and so enable you to construct for yourself such a multiple bill as each of them, acting separately, ought to have provided. For a contents bill of the old type you have nowadays to rely on the weekly papers. That of the *Spectator* is, I think, an admirable specimen, giving even the subjects of "Letters to the Editor."

My own earliest recollections of contents bills date from the later period of the American Civil War. Events of thrilling interest were then taking place, and I looked eagerly for the news on my way to school. Paternal disquisitions had produced an enthusiasm for the cause of the North, and the North had then begun to be the winning side. In such a time of struggle a boy must of course have a hero, and mine was General Sherman. His victories were recorded on the contents bills, and well do I remember the size of the letters which announced the Fall of Atlanta. A later announcement, "Sherman's Atrocities in his March through Georgia," filled me at first with a sort of vicarious shame, until I bethought me that it might be—nay, must be—a scandalous libel. In those days there was no Atlantic cable, and the news was telegraphed from Queenstown once or twice a week on the arrival there of the Cunard or other liner. But the news telegraphed was in outline only, and next day there was always on the contents bills in moderately-sized type the line "Details of American News," that is to say, extracts from the newspapers and letters which had been brought on by the steamer to Liverpool. One day there came very terrible news: "Assassination of President Lincoln." My recollection of this event is distinctly

associated with the contents bill, because I remember the length of the word "assassination" and the limit put upon the size of the letters by the necessity of getting it within the breadth of the bill. And here I may note a change of wording which has since come over such announcements. Nowadays the word would often be turned into a participle, and we should read "President Lincoln assassinated," which is less formal and effects a slight shortening. But at that time you would not find a verb or participle on the whole bill. The noun reigned supreme. Phrases and not sentences were, as they still are, the rule, but they were phrases based on substantives. *A propos* of this I may note that a paragraphist very recently called attention to the effect of the headline on the English vocabulary, and the same is true of contents bills. He notes how "constitutional" and "unconstitutional" are falling into disuse because they are too long for a headline, and how for the same reason "prohibition" is giving way to "ban," "reminiscence" to "echo," and "displace" to "oust," a result which tends to revive and foster the English elements in the language at the expense of the Latin, because the words of Latin origin are generally the longest.

The philosophic bystander who holds aloof from politics will note what different conclusions can be drawn by different papers from the same facts. Thus on one and the same morning in the early part of the last general election you might read on three separate bills:—"Peers' Hopeless Battle," "Another bad day for the Radicals," and "People's Victory Assured." Some sub-editors, it seems, are occasionally perverse, like the one who objected to the words, "Awful Fire in a Tallow Factory" going on the contents bill because, as he said, "it was only a little fat in the fire."

The reader of a contents bill needs to be on his guard against allowing his imagination to travel beyond the

literal meaning of the statements put before him, for they are often craftily designed with a view of inducing him to do so. A man may be shot without being killed, but the reader may not think of this when he reads of an individual having suffered that indignity. Again, in a great catastrophe the killed usually are only a small fraction of those who are more or less injured, and so the reader may be led to take too serious a view when he finds recorded "Two hundred killed and injured," with the two last words in much smaller type underneath the others.

Again, the observant wayfarer may often derive considerable amusement from the way in which the latest intelligence is divulged by various newspapers. Sometimes they are generous and tell you all you need wish to know. Sometimes they craftily disclose just so much as will make you wish to know more. But here they have to reckon with the rival papers, who may disclose the other part of the story and so make your information complete. Those who, like myself, are content to do without newspapers between Saturday and Monday may in the course of an afternoon walk find their knowledge growing from more to more as they pass one contents bill after another. Here are some of the successive steps by which not very long ago I obtained a degree of certitude about the Houndsditch tragedy. First: "Policeman killed by burglars." Next: "Five policemen shot by burglars." Next: "Two policemen killed. And, finally, "Sensational sequel to the murder of three policemen." Which last assured me of two facts, viz., that the number of killed was three, and that of the five shot two were merely injured. A similar experience was recently related in "Punch" as follows:—"We were anxious the other day to know the issue of a certain slander case. We saw 'Result' on a contents bill and put our hand in our pocket. Then we remarked another bill 'Result — Damages.' We still hesitated, until a third placard caught our eye,

'Result —— Heavy Damages.' This was all we wanted to know, and we retained our coin."

It is not to be supposed, however, that the designers of our contents bills are so simple or unwary as to give themselves away in this manner too frequently, and one may derive amusement of another kind by observing their efforts to deal in generalities. If the news is of a fairly prominent individual he is carefully left unnamed, but indicated by his occupation, preceded by the word "famous" or "noted." Thus the reader is cunningly induced to speculate in his mind whether it is Mr. A, whom he remembers seeing on a platform last winter, or Mr. B, about whom he read an interesting article last month, or Mr. C, who made so fine a speech in the House the other week, and so relieves his anxiety by purchasing the paper, only to learn it is none of these, but Mr. D., of whom perhaps he never heard before. Sometimes the adjective is in the superlative, and then the reader forthwith begins to work out the conundrum, who is the greatest or most famous of the class named, and of course invariably guesses wrongly. There is, I suppose, room for greatness in every sphere, though it is hard to see where it lies in the case of, say, a tobacconist. And yet it is not long since we saw announced, "Death of the Greatest English Tobacconist," and on investigation found that the reference was to a certain noble lord, whose peerage apparently was of no account beside the business of which he was the ornamental figurehead. But then coronets are cheap in these days.

Perhaps the most irritating bills are those which devote their whole space to a question in large type, a question of no importance to any human being, and one usually which it is impossible to answer with a straight "yes" or "no." "Are red-haired people bad-tempered?" "Should men marry young?" "Should women propose?" are types of these questions. They are usually propounded

by the weekly journals of the snippet type, and I suppose there are people who take an interest in discussing them, though whether they ever come to a definite decision about them I am inclined to doubt. With these may be ranked the enigmatic announcements which some papers delight in. When the whole bill contains nothing but the two words "Put off" you must do one of two things, according to your temperament—you must either at once purchase the paper to relieve your insatiable curiosity to know *what* is put off, or you must callously decide that you do not care a rap what it is. I personally chose the latter course. And when a year or two ago I was startled to read, as the sole news of the day, "It is *your* money we want," I never asked the reason why, but was thankful there was enough law and order in the country to protect me against this new type of highwayman, who anyhow defrauded me of the news I ought to have got from his bill.

If you wish to see contents bills still flourishing as in the old days you must go to one of the smaller country towns. Here it is still the custom to fill the bill with a comprehensive list of the items which are to be found in the weekly paper, and interesting reading it often makes. Here you will find an echo of "the rustic cackle of their bourg." The meeting of the Band of Hope, the dedication of the new organ, the Old Folks' Party, the presentation to the Cricket Club Secretary, the "Brilliant Functions," such as a Territorial or a Mayoral dinner, the lecture at the Literary Institute, all find a place in larger or smaller type on the contents bill. You will read on one bill of "Radical Intolerance," and on another of the "Exposure of a Contemptible Tory Trick." And, more than anything else, you will read of the weddings. "Fashionable Marriage at St. Mark's," "Miss de Vere's Wedding: Full list of presents." Even the humbler folk can rely on their escapades in this direction being duly chronicled on the bills, and if there is absolutely nothing to render them

distinguished they can be sure at any rate of "Pretty Wedding," or "Interesting Wedding," or at the very worst "Local Wedding."

It will be seen that unconsciously, but I suppose inevitably, I have come round to the subject of weddings, and as all well-regulated stories reach their climax at that stage, I will let mine follow their example and so bring it to a conclusion.

A SOUTH AMERICAN VILLAGE.

By GEORGE S. LANCASHIRE.

IT is two day's sail from Kingston to Santa Marta, the oldest port on the Spanish Main, and the time of departure was fixed to arrive there about mid-day.

The little lighthouse guarding the bay was noted on the ship's chart as "unreliable," the usual remark against all such institutions in these regions. The authorities here are lax in their supervision, and the lighthouse keeper acts as befits a man not born to be the slave of anything. Life is not so precious that to preserve it should necessitate the automaton-like regularity of attending to the lamps each night. Lighthouses satisfy the pushful energy of the Northerners but that is no reason why they should disturb the placidness of life. So there they remain, a valueless tribute to the energetic races who so desire wealth above happiness that they scour the uttermost ends of the earth in its search.

A sunless world it was when we entered the almost landlocked bay, the bay in which Amyas Leigh stormed and captured the Spanish Galleon, richly laden with the spoils of the Indies.

The female portion of the deck passengers had been busy from early morning. Their showy dresses, their trimmings of bewildering hues, their bracelets, brooches, necklets, all had been stowed away carefully on embarking at Jamaica, and now the hour was approaching for them to serve their purpose. Ease and comfort had been the first consideration whilst on board, now the conventionalities were to be respected, once more. And their early

rising was justified; true their colours seemed so violent as to be almost explosive, yet they made a brave show on landing.

There is nothing to conjure up the gorgeous days of Spain in the appearance of Santa Marta from the sea. There can be seen the remains of the old fort which Sir Francis Drake destroyed, to remind one of the days of old when the adventurous spirit of the English was moved by the love of plunder and the killing of Spaniards. Between the town and the beach is a sodden swamp across which runs a light railway to the diminutive wharf, and in one corner, made level, could be seen faintly the marks of the tennis courts used in the dry season by the few English or perhaps Scotch people here.

The houses are mostly of two stories, with faded white walls or brown walls, sunbaked and dirty looking, and the mud between the thin laths of wood, of which some of the houses were made, was so crumbling away that the thrust of a penknife would have allowed a free draught of air to pass through.

There are none of those high, old, mullioned houses with corinthian portals and exquisitely chiselled bearings over the doorways, with their cool patios reminiscent of their beloved Seville, erected by the aristocratic Spaniards in their conquering days. No, Santa Marta has been pillaged and destroyed too often; no trace of its former importance remains. Its streets are as thick in sand and dust as a dry beach, and in time of rain they are turned to streams and pour their water into the marsh which becomes a lake. The few shops are storehouses filled with a strange medley of goods in great disarray, and before their tiny counters are wooden gratings.

The sky was sullen and overcast, the air was heated and heavy, and the drab colourless streets were listless and dispirited. Signs of activity were few, now and again a man of a dull brick coloured skin ambles past on mule-back, half-naked children loll in the doorways, and women

sit and gossip in the dim, cool darkness of their bare rooms.

Through the open doorways could be seen the mud floors and the scant furniture, no pictures were on the walls save here and there a Madonna and Child or a coloured advertisement of some American or English fabric. The keynote of all was sadness and melancholy, which, one felt, the brilliant sunlight would have dissipated.

The depressing feeling vanished, so prone are we to outward impressions, on a sudden view of a blaze of gorgeous colour. There were flowers of every tint and the trees and bushes were a very revel of green. It illuminated everything with a kind of joyousness. It was the public park, a rare luxury in a Spanish-speaking town of this size. It was an oasis in a desert of mean streets, for Nature had scattered in profusion in this little spot her bounteous wealth of vegetation, of which she is so prodigal here. For some reason, doubtless the indifference of the official, the gate was locked. "Gifts break rocks," says the Spaniard, but unfortunately we were unable to find the rock.

The few signs of life in the town were in the roadway opposite, for here on forms and chairs sat the officers from the barracks in their richly bedizened uniforms, smoking and chatting. This was the characteristic touch required, it revealed to us the Spaniard of our imagination, pleasure-loving, gay, and careless. It is a false idea, but we English are prone to sentimentalise everything, it is inherent in us, and what matters truth if we see apparent evidence of our belief!

The most imposing building of the town is the Cathedral, whose two white towers rise aloft making them conspicuous objects from afar. The interior is very commonplace and there is nothing of interest architecturally. There were many vases of wax flowers under glass and pictures of the Virgin, and Christ on the Crucifix, in colours of gaudy hue. The crudity of it all was heightened by the large

windows which let in the garish light, in such contrast to the dim religious gloom that pervades all Cathedrals in their mother country.

In the Cemetery most of the memorials of the dead were twigs placed in the ground in the shape of a cross, or thin laths, on which were scribbled the names, some so badly written and spelt as to be almost undecipherable. They had a personal and pathetic touch and in their rough simplicity seemed eloquent. On one side of the wall were stone slabs, on which were rudely painted the names of persons buried, but where the bodies were there was no indication. Under the name of one was painted a skull and cross-bones. Doubtless a rebel and a heretic who must needs record in death his revolt against the myriad meannesses that dwarf mankind, or his defiance of the established order of things. And he answered in life to the conventional name of José Maria.

On the verge of the town and at the side of the road ran an open waterway in which children were bathing and paddling. It was instructive to see two of the lads fill a water barrel and take it home for drinking purposes. The streets seemed to end abruptly in the country, and on leaving them behind there could be seen, here and there in a clearing of the brush, huts built of bamboo stakes, thatched with palm leaves, or low squat mud-built houses with overhanging eaves, surrounded with lofty palm trees, mango and shaddock trees, and for live stock, fowls, goats, and pigs. The hedges along the roadside were cactus bushes, the road itself being but a wide path beaten down by the traffic. Bright green lizards darted frequently across the path and one sometimes noticed a snake disappearing through the thick vegetation, whilst brilliantly plumaged birds flitted about. If one rested awhile in this heated atmosphere the hum of unseen insects seemed to hang in the air.

At every sign of habitation multi-coloured rags were hung to dry, which stood out blotchily against the

greens of the vegetation. It was washing day, and women with bundles of clothes upon their heads walked by, swinging and balancing upon their hips, to or from the wide and swift flowing yellow river. There all was gaiety and animation.

They were not satisfied with merely dipping the clothes in water, but they themselves entered the river, which seemed to have on them the effects of the waters of Lethe. Those on the banks who had passed through the purifying and invigorating waters were lolling after their labours, in their clean white sheets or gowns, and were passing animated jokes to their neighbours, enjoying the cooling river. Work and pleasure were harmoniously combined.

Round a bend of the river was a tannery, the men preparing the hides in the primitive style of their forefathers, hundreds of years ago, as if chemistry and machinery were unknown.

Santa Marta has been styled the pearl of America from the beauty of its surroundings, but during my stay there the air was heated and moist, phalanxes of clouds amassed themselves about the mountain tops and hid from view the wealth of vegetation and the glory of the town—the snow-capped peak that can be seen so many miles away at sea. I desired, with longing, the clearness of the atmosphere, although it had brought with it the reverberating heat of the tropics, but perchance the view in imagination's eye excelled the real, and then, who knows, we are contrary beings, the coolness of the rain and the shelter of the clouds might have risen up like a mirage in the mind, for the reality of which all æsthetic pleasures would have counted little.

"NICHOLAS'S NOTES" AND OTHER
WORK OF WILLIAM JEFFERY
PROWSE, 1836-70.

By HERBERT EVELYN CAMPBELL.

WILLIAM JEFFERY PROWSE, who was born at Torquay 6th May, 1836, and lived in an age rather more Bohemian, at all events outwardly, than the present, shows, in the little book I am dealing with, that there is heart and character even in the fooling of the men of that day. He went first to a school kept by Mr. Wanostrocht, the "Felix" of fame as a writer on cricket. He was not a strong boy, but he "loved manly sports, and took a special delight in cricket." He loved the sea and Polar exploration. In 1861 he was a leader-writer on the *Daily Telegraph*. In 1865 his health began to fail: the dread disease consumption claimed him. He passed the winters of 1867-8-9 at Cimies, near Nice, where he died on Easter Sunday, 1870.

Let me say that this little book has lived among those I most value, grave and gay, these forty years. I had it bound at that period, in a volume which includes Artemus Ward, the Orpheus C. Kerr papers, and a Boston translation, "The Nose of a Notary," of a comical book by Edmond About. This volume has been a constant companion, and certainly a justification of the practice of occasionally collecting and treasuring what appeals as not altogether fugitive literature. The unconsidered trifles of each man's library are not the least valuable part of it,

just as sketches are often worth more than finished pictures; and these "Nicholas" papers were written, be it remembered, "week by week, in the brief intervals of arduous and engrossing journalistic work," so Hood said. I used to read them in my schoolboy days, in "Fun," as it came out weekly. At the railway stations the boys called, "Poonch-Foon-er-Joody," and sometimes they were all worth buying at their various prices of 3d., 1d. and 2d. "Punch" alone has survived, and if it has passed through periods of "not so good as it used to be," with the time-honoured answer, "It never was," it is now frequently quite as good as ever! May its spirit of fairness and good-nature and hatred of humbug always continue. "Punch" is a contemporary history and national asset; this is generally conceded. And I hope I may claim the work of such men as W. J. Prowse as being in this category, though he was not a contributor to "Punch."

A love of sport is inherent in Britons, who are trained to take the rough with the smooth. We know there is much blackguardism connected with the Turf, as well as much that is manly and straightforward. These "contributions," extending over 126 pages of a large-print shilling book (Routledge, about 1870), collected from the pages of "Fun," to which Gilbert was then contributing the "Bab Ballads," deal with the "Vaticinations" of a turf prophet, and take you through his good luck and misfortunes, the reader and the prophet and the editor being together in confidence most of the time, opportunity for chaff about the various contemporary happenings being constantly availed of, in a spirit of satire that is never ill-natured. I might perhaps give one of the "notes" in its entirety. It is the one following a prophecy in the manner of Ossian, from Nicholas's own shooting-box in "Glenhoolachanachan," a property not to be found, I should suppose, in any register of moors to be let!

UNPARALLELED TRIUMPH OF THE PROPHET! NICHOLAS
ENTIRELY RIGHT AGAIN!! WHAT A MAN HE IS, TO BE
SURE!!!

Belgravia.

My dear young Friend,—

NICHOLAS have now returned from his long vocation among the Highland hills in Scotlandshire, where his heart still is, a-chasing the wild deer and hunting the roe, so to speak, not as I ever did so, it being far too violent for my period, and preferred having a crack at a grouse bird from the top of a pony or else lying down on your back and admiring of the sceneries.

All as it is now necessary for the Prophet to say about Caledonia is as no better whisky can be found throughout the United Kingdom of Great Britain, than whom perhaps on which the sun himself never sets, but the longest holiday it must come to an end, my dear young feller, and I travelled right through to London.

On arriving in a city which it have been wittily described as the modern Babylon, NICHOLAS found as the whole town was ringing with his name. The prophecy which he vaticinated of in your last impression was the theme of universal everybody's talking of it.

You are so extremely fond, young man, of calling the grey-headed and the good a "unprincipled old duffer," that it may well be asked you whether, even supposing me to be "old" and "unprincipled," NICHOLAS is so much of a "duffer" after all?

What were the three horses given by him for the St. Leger in your last impression?

Messrs. Printers & Co., please put it tabular.

<i>Selections of Nicholas.</i>	<i>Actual Results.</i>
Lord Lyon	Lord Lyon
Savernake	Savernake
Knight of the Crescent	Knight of the Crescent

This fact, sir, speaks for itself.

I do not think as I shall ever write for you again. The emolument ain't much to speak of, not to a man as has made pots of money by my own unaided genius, and I do *not* like being called "an unprincipled old duffer" every week. Who would?

At any rate, perhaps you may think it worth your while to comply with the terms of the Prophet's Ultimatorium, which I annex, and hope as all may yet be well, for I hate quarrelling with a friend when there is scarcely anything to be got by it.

My Ultimatorium.

1. You must rise my salary.
2. You must withdraw the expression "unprincipled old duffer."
3. You must print my copy exact as I send it, and no humbugging about authography or pointuation.
4. You must always speak of me more respectful, both in public and private.
5. We will have a little dinner at a place I know.
6. Sherry wine.
7. No more gammon about Knurr and Spell. Fork out the Manuscript, my boy!

NICHOLAS.

Editorial Note.—We accept this Ultimatorium, so far as we are able. The St. Leger Prophecy was certainly admirable, but we have *not* received the Manuscript of Knurr and Spell.

When I first came here, some thirty-three years ago by Shrewsbury clock, to say nothing of our own Manchester chimes, some of the following lines of Prowse were ringing in my head, as I visited at times the Town Hall, and saw the rise and progress of Madox Brown's work, and learnt something of the magical hues with which Nature endows a city of workers, as I went through Albert Square to my work in the early morning, hearing what the bells say:—

All through this hour,
Lord, be our guide;
And by Thy power
No foot shall slide!

These are the verses I had in mind; they are, I think, worth printing in full:—

F

LEARNING THE VERBS,

"Signifying to be, to do, or to suffer."

"To be?" Well, I followed the track;
 That gave me a chance of existence,
 But I honestly own, looking back,
 That it's prettiest viewed from a distance.
 Just now it seems easy and bright,
 But I haven't forgotten my scrambles
 Over horrible rocks, or the night
 That I spent in the midst of the brambles.
 At times from the path I might stray,
 And thus make the journeying rougher,
 But still I was learning the way,
 "To Be, or to Do, or to Suffer!"

"To do?" I have worked rather hard,
 And my present position is cosy;
 But I haven't done much as a Bard,
 And my prose—well, of course it is prosy!
 The schemes and the aims of my youth
 Have long from old Time had a floorer,
 And I doubt—shall I tell you the truth?
 If the world be a penny the poorer!
 If you cannot your vanity curb,
 You must either, my friend, be a duffer,
 Or you haven't yet learnt that a verb
 Is "To Be, or to Do, or to Suffer!"

"To suffer?" I took my degrees
 Long ago in that branch of our knowledge,
 Where our hearts and our hopes are the fees,
 And the universe serves as a college.
 I have had, as it is, rather more
 Than the usual share of affliction;
 And that much is remaining in store
 Is my very decided conviction.
 But I find myself growing with years
 Insensibly tougher and tougher;
 I can manage, I think, without tears,
 "To Be, and to Do, and to Suffer!"

I have stated the facts of the case,
 But heaven forbid I should grumble,
 And I need not complain of a place
 That suits my capacities humble.
 I have learnt how "to be"—well, a man:
 How "to do"—well, a part of my duty:
 And in "suffering," own that the Plan
 Of the World is all goodness and beauty!
 Still at times from the path I may stray,
 And thus make the journeying rougher;
 But, at least, I am learning the way
 "To Be, and to Do, and to Suffer!"

I would not dream of comparing those days with these, to our disparagement. We have made progress in a hundred ways, and are still advancing, so I firmly believe. But a look of affectionate regard will sometimes be cast by those among us of middle life and beyond, towards the days in which we lived, forty years ago, and tried to learn their lessons from every point of view, not omitting the news of the day, and the fun and the joy and irony, as well as the seriousness of it.

Prowse used his "Nicholas" as a stalking horse, and evolved a character that will live. I am inclined to share the enthusiasm of his editor, when he says that "a creation like this might have been not unworthy even of the pen which drew Captain Costigan."

Nicholas begins in prosperity, and dates his contribution from Belgravia; he writes from Paris; then, in misfortune, from Bermondsey and Peckham; then from the Highlands in prosperity, following an account of a cricket match "not a hundred miles from Sandringham"; and his last letter, in the issue of Sept. 21st, 1867, is headed, "The Atlantic Ocean, in the Midst of the Equalnoxious Gales." It was supposed to be contained in an empty 'sherry-wine' bottle, and to convey to the readers of "Fun" a correct tip for the Leger, Nicholas having been "wallowing in the lapses of luxury" at Ventnor, and setting out thence for a day's sea-fishing, which made him extremely ill. He describes

the proceedings in a way which leaves some modern realists far behind, for Nicholas's sense of humour is not possessed by all of these gentry.

The various turns of queer grammar and syntax and "authorgraphy"—so he spells it in a "note" in June '66—"than whom perhaps," "vanity-glorious," "ye canst not think so," "Oxtabs and Cantabonians," and many more quaint methods of misspelling and inverted allusiveness are quite Nicholas's own. He wrote parodies, and is mentioned as having done a very good one of the "Ancient Mariner," but I have never cared very much for parodies or imitations, except, perhaps something as good as Calverley's "The Cock and the Bull." Many of Prowse's verses are good—the lines on the latest Victoria Cross won at the Gambia River, by "an unromantic hero by the name of Samuel Hodge," and the verses on "The Pace that Kills."

Prowse is one of the glorious band of men who spend their time, even in their working lives, in quiet and gentle protest against humbug, nonsense, sham, impurity; his verses show, in their simple roughness, which is better than overdone refinement, the faith that is in him. His work is entirely straightforward; there is nowhere a trace of that most damnable, most mean, stupid, sterile thing, a *sneer*. Let me here recognise, that with all its faults and failings, the journalism of the present day goes ahead on correct principles. It does not sneer. Its motto is, "Go forward," the "gang forward" of a good old Scots family, and one of the best of the mottoes that do not deceive—as some do.

The man who has grasped the essential facts of literature and worked for them dies young, whatever his age. It is therefore mostly for the tougher survivor into middle or old age to determine the limits of the work any man leaves behind him, any man, more particularly, who leaves, in accepted print, his message to his generation. And the journalism of this present day, which of course includes

all the literature which may or may not have been acquired by the professing journalist, as well as the results of his actual experience of life, does most certainly make appeal to those who think. It is not merely an affair of snapshot photography; it is alive, and I hope all our honest journalists of to-day will keep alive.

Prowse's poem "The City of Prague" has got into the anthologies, which is something, perhaps, but not much, having regard to the sort of stuff which does duty in some of these compilations. It is here quoted in full:—

THE CITY OF PRAGUE.

Scene: "Bohemia, a desert country near the sea."—*Shakespeare.*

I dwelt in a city enchanted,
And lonely, indeed, was my lot;
Two guineas a week, all I wanted,
Was certainly all that I got.
Well, somehow I found it was plenty;
Perhaps you may find it the same,
If—if you are just five-and-twenty,
With industry, hope, and an aim:
Though the latitude's rather uncertain,
And the longitude also is vague,
The persons I pity who know not the city,
The beautiful City of Prague!

Bohemian of course were my neighbours,
And not of a pastoral kind!
Our pipes were of clay, and our tabors
Would scarcely be easy to find.
Our Tabors? Instead of such mountains,
Ben Holborn was all we could share,
And the nearest available fountains
Were the horrible things in the square:
Does the latitude still seem uncertain?
Or think ye the longitude vague?
The persons I pity who know not the city,
The beautiful City of Prague!

How we laughed as we laboured together !
 How well I remember, to-day,
 Our " outings " in midsummer weather,
 Our winter delights at the play !
 We were not over-nice in our dinners ;
 Our " rooms " were up rickety stairs ;
 But if hope be the wealth of beginners,
 By Jove we were all millionaires !
 Our incomes were very uncertain,
 Our prospects were equally vague ;
 Yet the persons I pity who know not the city,
 The beautiful City of Prague !

If at times the horizon was frowning,
 Or the ocean of life looking grim,
 Who dreamed, do you fancy, of drowning ?
 Not we, for we knew we could swim . . .
 O ! Friends, by whose side I was breasting
 The billows that rolled to the shore,
 Ye are quietly, quietly resting,
 To laugh and to labour no more !
 Still in accents a little uncertain,
 And tones that are possibly vague,
 The persons I pity who know not the city,
 The beautiful City of Prague !

L'envoi.

As for me, I have come to an anchor ;
 I have taken my watch out of pawn ;
 I keep an account with a banker,
 Which at present is *not* overdrawn.
 Though my clothes may be none of the smartest,
 The " snip " has receipted the bill ;
 But the days I was poor and an artist
 Are the dearest of days to me still !
 Though the latitude's rather uncertain,
 And the longitude also is vague,
 The persons I pity who know not the city,
 The beautiful City of Prague !

Sir Edward Russell wrote to me in high terms of the good qualities of Prowse, whom he knew. The personality of Nicholas and his author, Prowse, as embodied in this

little book—to be reprinted, as I hope, some day—comes before me once again as I read Mr. H. W. Nevins's "Books and Personalities." For this reason, that there are few things so good in my experience as, in their different ways, Mr. Nevins's introduction to his collection of notes on various great men and their work, and the younger Hood's to the sporting notes and poems of Prowse. To compare these men is absurd—the experience and expression of the later writer is so far ahead, but they have the truth at heart, both of them. And the real introduction or brief memoir, so often skipped, is sure to be, in its way, as valuable as the notes of Sir Walter Scott to his poems and novels, which are among the most readable of things.

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

By JOHN H. SWANN.

WE leave the rolling tide of variegated noise—the torrential flow of the twentieth century through the streets of Manchester—and seek the learned calm of the John Rylands Library. There, so far as they can be expressed in written or printed words, or pictured in the glowing colour of illuminated manuscripts, are preserved the passion and devotion of centuries, the white flame of sainthood, the glory of chivalry, the far-seeing dream and the rich fancy of the poet, the earnest warning of the preacher, the wisdom of ancient thinkers, the antique stories of the beauty and fascination of women, the dim echoes of ‘battles long-ago,’ the majesty and meekness of faith.

Amid all this wonderful spoil of the long centuries there is a small book of devotion, a “book of hours”; a manuscript on vellum, daintily written and painted more than three hundred years ago. But not alone for its old-time prayers; nor for its beautiful artistry of brush and pen do we seek this little volume. As the leaves with their black text and pride of gold and colour are turned, there comes one where but a portion of the page is occupied. In the blank space left, a former owner has written these words in old French, “*Mon Dieu, confondez mes ennemys. M.*”

It is a good hand, a queenly hand we may say, for the writer was none other than that beautiful woman of sad and sinful memory, Mary Queen of Scots. “My God, confound my enemies;”—through the long, long years that cry of a soul distressed grips our heart-strings. Who

may realise what pain of the spirit wrung out those words? Who can fathom the meaning of what is here suggested? And who shall judge a soul seared as this one was with the fiercest flame of temptation? Dowered with the peril of beauty, with the pride and lonely height of royal state; the object of bitter hatred and of devoted love:—who amongst us shall judge this soul?

“My God confound my enemies”:—as we look again at the faded writing there comes a vision of the awful fire-lit and sable-hung castle-hall of Fotheringay, of a stately, white-throated woman, and the descending flash of a keen-edged axe Leaving the Library with its precious treasures, we are once again amid the tumult, the hurrying to and fro, of modern life, strangely conscious that we have had a glimpse under the surface where lie the unchanging deeps, linking century to century, and stretching forth into illimitable eternity.

**"THE SONG OF THE MOUNTAIN
STREAM."**

ENGELBERG, 1910.

By LAURENCE CLAY.

Impetuous, headlong, dashing I go
On to the open sea,
From th' inviolate peace of the icebound snow,
A peace nevermore for me.

My song's of the sea—where the white horses fly
Hunting the wind's bivouac;
And white with the passion of freedom am I
As I rush o'er my stony track.

There's danger for all who hinder my course
For the strength of youth is mine;
I fear not the rock, nor know I remorse
When headlong I fling the tall pine.

Onward, aye onward! its in my white blood,
Defying restraint, I'm free;
Ne'er backward I flow but by torrent and flood
I dash to my home in the sea.

